Positive Futures for Serbian Sport

by

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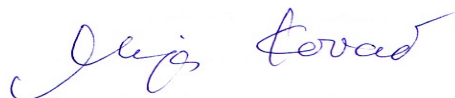
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Abstract

This thesis is oriented towards the investigation of the opportunities for 'positive futures' in and through sport in Serbia. It critically explores the social significance of *established* and *emerging* sports—football (grassroots programme) and rugby league—in the challenging social context of Serbian society via the theoretical prism of social capital.

Contemporary debate on sport's social role, underlining its multidimensional capacity in the creation and maintenance of social capital and associated socially cohesive processes—social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation—*in* and *through* sport, is often instigated within the developed world academe, and has not been oriented to questioning the link between sport, social capital and community benefits in the contexts of 'transitional' societies residing at the European semi-periphery. This thesis seeks, hence, to address this void by examining the social implications of sport for a multitude of communities in the context of semi-peripheral Serbia. In particular, it investigates the extent to which, and the ways in which, selected sports foster or impede the creation of different forms of social capital instrumental in sport and community development, including the role of wider social and sport policy contexts in these endeavours.

Methodologically, the study deploys a qualitative multiple-case study approach using semi-structured individual and group interviews in conjuction with content analysis of official documents and direct observation of selected cases.

The exploration of evolving contexts of selected sports against the backdrop of Serbia suggests that the representation of different forms of social capital varies among researched cases relevant to their position within the meso sporting context and to specific traits of the wider social context. In this vein, as a dynamic and transferable social construct, social capital generated and maintained in and through explored sports floats between bonding and bridging points on an axis with linking social capital residing closer to the bonding point on this axis. In these constellations norms of reciprocity are positioned as the key cultural element of the emerging social capital models that assist in opening up the opportunities for expanding social cohesion via social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation. Likewise, the evidence from the study challenges a dominant social capital conceptual approach by portraying the ways cultural elements of the concept—trust and norms of reciprocity—are mutually interwoven, context-dependent and how they interact in their structural webs within extracted sport social capital models.

As evidence from the research further shows, the nature of social capital in regard to the explored sports corresponds to the ways socially cohesive processes are established for different scale community benefits. Yet, the reflextion of the correlation between the nature of social capital and the nature of socially cohesive processes in and around selected sports indicates that bonding social capital generated in and through sport may have the capacity to maintain socially cohesive processes while an inherently positive association between bridging social capital and community benefits in and through sport in this particular social context needs to be revisited. Finally, in examining the environment for sport and community development in Serbia, it is indicative that a pro-social sport policy context should comprehensively account for the wider social relevance of sport and its ability to imbue bottom-up cultural change at both sport and society levels. This awarness is central to policy recommendations formulated in the conclusion of this thesis.

This study thus provides an original contribution to knowledge by probing the nexus between investigated sports and the nature of social capital created, the role, position and interrelatedness of distincitive structral and cultural social capital elements within the created sport social capital models, associated social benefits and pro-social sport policies in the semi-peripheral context of Serbia.

Keywords: social capital, sport, Serbia, community benefit, social context, sport policy

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Any errors, omissions and flaws in this thesis are solely mine.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AVP	Autonomous Province of Vojvodina
B.A.A.P.	Balkan Alpe Adria Project
BuSH	Built, Sport and Health
CeSID	Centar za slobodne izbore i demokratiju [Centre for Free Elections and Democracy]
CoE	Council of Europe
DFA	Dečija fudbalska asocijacija [Children's Football Association]
DSFA	Dečija sportska fer plej asociajacija [Children's Fair Play Sport Association]
EU	European Union
EC	European Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFP	Grassroots Football Programme
FAS	Football Association of Serbia
FAY	Football Association of Yugoslavia
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FIRA	Fédération Internationale de Rugby Amateur
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LSG	Local Self-Government
MYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDS	National Sport Development Strategy
NSPVMSE	National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence and Misbehaviour at Sport Events
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFFS	Open Fun Football Schools
RFL	Rugby Football League
RLEF	Rugby League European Federation
RLIF	Rugby League International Federation
RQ	Research Question
SAI	State Audit Institution
SDP IWG	Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SOC	Serbian Olympic Committee
SRLF	Serbian Rugby League Federation

SSU	Serbian Sport Union
UCLan	University of Central Lancashire
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UoB	University of Belgrade
UNOSDP	United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace
VAT	Value Added Tax
WWII	Second World War

Note: In order to distinguish the names of the Serbian rugby league clubs from the names of towns or city districts they incorporate, reference to clubs' names are italicised, and for the matter of consistency throughout the thesis all rugby league clubs, with or without city districts, or town names incorporated in the name of club, are also referred to in italics.

CHAPTER 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is oriented towards the investigation of the possibility of 'positive futures' in and through Serbian sport. It is centred upon the exploration of the opportunities for development in the challenging context of Serbian society advanced through the construction of resourceful webs of social relations in and around sport. This opening chapter outlines the rationale and the background for this research, the aim and specific objectives of the study, including the methodological approach and the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Research Rationale and Background

The inspiration to unfold this research project originates from intricate questions about the nexus between the wider social contextual traits and the potential of sport to assist in different scaled social developments and/or social deviations. Yet, within Serbian contextual boundaries, including the countries of the Western Balkans, investigations in this direction have often been chiefly centred upon sport's role (particularly football) in instilling socially negative, disruptive and de-developmental orders that resonate with issues of violence, nationalism, racism, xenophobia and homophobia, thus wide-scale cleavages between 'us' and 'them' (e.g. Brentin, 2013; Đorđević, 2012a, 2012b; Kovač, 2005; Mills, 2009, 2013; Nielsen, 2010, 2013; Pavasovic Trost and Kovacevic, 2013; Savković, 2010; Vrcan and Lalić, 1999; Vrcan, 2002; Wood, 2013). As a resonance of the need to increase the understanding of these issues in connection to the wider social, political, economic and cultural contexts in Serbia characterised by increasing instabilities, population vulnerability, increased crime and violence, and legacies of horrendous ethnic conflicts (Blagojević, 2009b; Cvejić, 2004; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Hughson, 2013b; Lošonc, 2003), it is not surprising that scholars have embarked on illuminating and energising these pressing aspects of sport's social influence by signposting the link between sport and specific macro contextual settings. Because appeals to take on such research paths are many and overly present in the everyday lives of the local community. Intriguingly, and as an example that we often tend to take for granted, the graffiti written throughout Belgrade's streets voicing the following message: 'Sport Health Patriotism' (Sport Zdravlje Rodoljublje) signed by Srbska

Akcija (Serbian Action), an organisation that promotes ideas of racism, nationalism and violence for the idea of 'guarding the Serbian nation and orthodox religion' (Necin, 2012; Serbian Action, 2010) time and time again reminds us of particular disruptive populist discourses promoting the social and political role of sport in the Serbian local setting while calling for continuous investigation about the social meanings of sport in this country.

Figure 1. Graffiti written on the fence of a primary school situated in a residential area of Belgrade ('Sport Health Patriotism')

Source: Photography by author, July 2012.

Therefore, drawing from Blagojević's discussion on 'positive history' as a social heritage associated with cooperation, communication, exchange and cohesion as opposed to the legacies of 'othering', separation and exclusion (2009b: 215), this study has sought to bring a slight balance to the existing knowledge about the social role for sport in the transitional Serbian context by shifting the analytical focus to the exploration of the prospect for 'positive futures' in and around this cultural field. As argued by Spaaij, sociological understanding of the social impact of sport requires a critical approach which examines sport's positive and negative traits and which critically reflects on its own values and socio-historical contexts (2011: 4). Thus, whilst responding to the obvious demand for more scholarship that seriously examines sport as a product and instigator of social processes in this particular context, the study reflects upon the need for further critical exploration of the social benefits of sport in different

social, political, economic and cultural contexts (Kay, 2009; Spaaij, 2011), that can extend our understanding of complex and multi-layered processes in the active engagement in sport through which individuals and the community may benefit from (Kay, 2009: 1188). Thus, through a pioneering discussion about the possibilities for 'positive futures' in Serbian sport, this thesis intends to further contribute to one of the focal contemporary sport developmental discourse ideas which suggests that sport may be oriented towards wider social ends (Spaaij, 2011).

The existing body of research suggests the multidimensional nature of sport's social impact reflected in its capacity to contribute to social cohesion via social integration, social inclusion and active civic participation, as well as through the promotion of tolerance, inter-cultural understanding, reconciliation, interethnic dialogue, and, thus, community development (e.g. Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2007; Harris, 1998; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; Hughson et al., 2005; Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Spaaij, 2011). In this respect, in the past decade the concept of social capital has been accepted by a great majority of scholars in their attempts to meet conceptual challenges in critically assessing sport's social role. As Nicholson and Hoye have commented recently, although the relationship between sport and social capital is yet to be scrutinised, it represents a promising approach to the topics of how sport may affect an array of developments via social capital generation and maintenance endeavours (2008).

The core idea of social capital is that networks of relationships have value (Coleman, 1988; Field, 2008; Putnam, 2000). The value of networks is reflected in their potential to engage people in cooperation and coordination processes for mutual advantage (Field, 2008) or as Putnam has suggested, the value of networks resonates with the ways cultures of trust and norms of reciprocity are involved in the creation of social capital as a 'private' and 'public' good (2000). Although much conceptual social capital thinking revolves around Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital the broader academic debate concerns the influential works of Bourdieu and Coleman, which treated social capital from the perspective of social reproduction and social order (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Yet, drawing from the present research orientation to investigate prospects for 'positive futures' grounded in endeavours of social cooperation for multilevel advancements, and having a broad view of social capital seminal theoretical stands, this study critically adopts Putnam's social capital model. But it also critically evaluates the model's premises, its relevance for sport and its wider social role, thus

dually contributing to existing knowledge: first by more closely scrutinising the relationship between sport and social capital in a particular context through pioneering investigation into the nature of social capital in and through sport in Serbia, and second via instigating the debate about the complex relations between elements of this social capital model—trust and norms of reciprocity created in a particular cultural field embedded in a macro transitional social context, which as it will be shown in Chapter 6, will raise some interesting theoretical implications.

For Putnam, better social connectedness affects a greater level of social solidarity and social cohesion through bonding and bridging as forms of social capital (2000). The distinction between these two forms of social capital is thus made from the perspective of social cohesion emphasising the dynamic social networks' ability to act inclusionary and/or exclusionary. In this vein, Putnam often uses sport as an example of associational activity to discuss the viability of community and the relevance of civic engagement in bridging 'unlikeness' (e.g. ethnicity, age, gender, social class) thus fostering collective interaction (ibid.). Yet, positive association between bridging social capital and an increase in social cohesion and active civic engagement (e.g. Briggs, 2004; Jeannotte, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Ravanera, 2008; Szreter, 2002) in and through sport should be taken with rigour, while the dominant exclusionary perspective on bonding social capital associated with sport might also be looked at through the other end of the telescope, as suggested in the works of Coalter (2007) and Spaaij (2011). But it also seems that there is a need to take on a decomposed approach to social capital types in assessing the relevance of the particular elements of social capital—trust and norms of reciprocity—in contributing to sport and community development via social inclusion, integration and active civic participation. This research will respond to that which previous research in the area has rarely tackled. Thus, in instigating debate about the social role of sport in the Serbian context, this research intends to bring attention to the connection between the nature of social capital, including the nature of the social capital model elements and community benefits and/or detriments manifested in social cohesion dynamics in and around sport.

In complementing this discussion a view of the traits of linking social capital in connection to sport that includes the institutional context within which networks are embedded and the role of the state in leveraging social capital at various interactional levels through delineating public policy discourses (Woolcock, 1998, 2001) is needed because 'the state, through supportive and creative action at various levels, may be able

to nurture an environment which fosters vibrant community social capital' (Spaaij, 2011: 107). Yet, social capital associated with community engagement may also reside in public institutions' mistreatments and their failure to abide by and maintain their mandate (Woolcock, 2001). What is more, in certain social and political contexts such as in Serbia, the traits of linking social capital, as argued by Cvetičanin and Popescu (2011), often resonate with 'political social capital', a pattern of context-specific vertical networking established between representatives of public institutions' and individuals or groups manifested in the exchange of public resources for exclusively private benefits. In the field of Serbian sport, developing in a specific social and political environment, little is known, however, about the characteristics of institutional exchanges and the support for development in and through sport, including the place of linking social capital in these endeavours. Although the role of institutional linkages in sport and community development in developed and developing social contexts has received some attention recently (Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Numerato, 2011; Spaaij, 2011) the need to further enlighten these issues in different social and political contexts seems to persist.

Besides, the role of the state in fostering social capital in and through sport has often been explored through the pro-social sport public policy discourses of developed countries (Adams, 2009; Coalter, 2007, 2013; Collins, 2003; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008, 2009; Persson, 2008;), while strategic orientations and policy recommendations to the governments of international organisations concerned with social development (Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008) and the recent engagement of the EU policy makers in developing a *societal role for sport* (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b) has widened policy and academic debate on the social role of sport and the position of institutional agents in these processes. As Coalter argues (2007), the new sport policy discourse in the majority of developed countries has made a shift in sport policy agendas from the traditional welfare approach of developing sport in the communities to developing communities through sport. However, in programming the creation of social capital in and through sport for wider social development in sport policy agendas, the need for an assessment of the positive nexus between sport, social capital and resulting community benefits remains (Coalter, 2008, 2010; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; Spaaij, 2009a), while the investigation of sport public policy discourses from the above perspective in different social and political contexts may open up new avenues in enhancing our understanding of the intricate nexus between sport development and community

development in particular social and political contexts. Hence, with Serbian sport policy and institutional backdrops in mind, including the centrality of the state's role in sport development (Šuput, 2009), introducing the analysis of the contemporary Serbian sport policy discourse through the location of social capital and socially cohesive constructs in sport policy agenda and their nexus with mandatory policy harmonisation endeavours on the EU accession route may compensate for the chronic dearth of empirical research in this domain with a practical implication for future policy-making aimed at 'positive futures' in Serbian sport. This exploratory study will therefore offer some opening accounts about the nexus between sport, community and policy development via social capital conceptual thinking while accounting for the relevance of the macro social, political, economic and cultural contexts in Serbia.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The principal aim of this research is to *critically interrogate the social benefits of sport explored through the theoretical concept of social capital in the context of Serbia*. In particular, the study seeks to challenge the extent to which and the ways in which, sport activities (governance, development and participation) foster or impede the creation of different forms of social capital and the related social benefits, focusing on correlations between sport development and community development, including the role of pro-social sport policies in the Serbian transitional context.

Thus, this study sets out the following research objectives:

a) Analysis of the nature of social capital created and maintained in and through *established* and *emerging* amateur team sports in Serbia—*the grassroots football programme* and *rugby league.* In providing the context for the above analysis this objective additionally includes a contextual investigation of the development of these sports—their developmental trajectories and organisational workings in Serbia.

b) Investigation of the abilities of the grassroots football programme and rugby league to create and sustain social cohesion, social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation in the form of sport volunteerism in and through sport, including the investigation of the link between the nature of socially cohesive constructs and the nature of social capital created and maintained in and through the researched sports.

c) Exploration of the Serbian *sport public policy context* from a social capital perspective which seeks to assist in completing the analysis on the nexus between sport, social capital, community benefits, and the wider macro context, that will result in a set of pro-social sport policy recommendations.

In order to meet the principal aim and deriving objectives, the study is guided by addressing the following research questions:

RQ1. What are the developmental and organisational contexts of the grassroots football programme and rugby league in Serbia?

RQ2. What is the nature of social capital in the context of the researched sports?

RQ3. How does social capital generated in and through the researched sports contribute to the development of social cohesion via active civic participation, social inclusion and social integration?

RQ4. How/why does the social context of Serbian society impact on the development of social capital in and through sport?

RQ5. How/why does Serbian sport policy address issues of social capital development in sport and in the community through sport?

1.4 On Research Methods

Informed by the nature of the main aim and derived objectives, this study adopts a qualitative, case study methodological approach that investigates contemporary phenomena within their real-life context (Yin, 2009). Although inductive in its nature, involving identifying and refining research issues from the process of data collection, the study relies upon a predesigned conceptual framework underpinned by theoretical propositions used to guide the empirical investigation of the selected cases (ibid.). Methodologically, the thesis should thus be perceived as a conceptually and data driven qualitative multiple-case study aimed at providing more compelling results and to make interpretations and explanations more vigorous (Yin, 2009).

The case selection draws on the distinction between *established sport*—the grassroots football programme (hereafter as GFP) and *emerging sport*—rugby league—in the meso sporting context and macro social and policy context of Serbia (see Chapter 3, section 3.2). While this distinction builds upon a flexible, more nuanced approach to defining sport in society accounting for variances of the particular social and cultural contexts sport is embedded in (Coakley and Pike, 2009: 6-7), it also reflects upon the

sport development and *development through sport* distinction (Coalter, 2007; Spaaij, 2011) represented in differing scopes throughout the cases (see Chapter 4). Thus, while rugby league as an emerging sport in Serbia is primarily concerned with sport development, which amongst others, stems from its position in the particular wider context, the GFP as an established sport in Serbia, is committed to both sport development, and development through sport. Moreover, the case selection strategy accounted for programmatic nuances within the GFP in Serbia. While this programme is oriented towards a broad array of developmental objectives in football (see Chapter 5), this research project was focused on particular programmatic initiatives in the domain of football for children, boys and girls of both regular and deprived population categories, including development in and thsrough football of intellectually disabled youth, relying on the potential of selected initiatives to best imbue bottom-up processes of both sport development and development through sport in the community (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2012a). Yet, in broader terms, the case selection strategy within the domain of established sports in Serbia is comprised of testing football's ability to establish the framework necessary for bottom-up positive social and cultural change, and thus, counterbalance the negative sporting and social developments connected to this sport in Serbia.

In contrast, rugby league has, as a case study, been approached comprehensively. Apart from views on sport development dynamics as one of the defining characteristics of the majority of emerging sports in Serbia, with rugby league featuring increased developmental momentum, the research project's case selection strategy relied upon the following criteria: a) the dearth of critical writing on rugby league development in different social contexts (Cottle and Keys, 2010), thus undocumented social histories in the Serbian (and Yugoslavian) context; b) the tradition, origins and contemporary development of this sport in its heartlands stemming from a wide array of divisive practices (Collins, 1996, 2006; Cottle and Keys, 2010; Long et al., 1997; Spracklen, 1996); c) the characteristics and the *ethos* of rugby league that presumably provide for increased team/social cohesion; d) a time-management and cost-effectiveness perspective that resonates with previously established contacts with gatekeepers who made access to this sporting community easier and faster.

Finally, the case selection additionally draws from the spatial dispersion of research cases, thus the cases' potential to affect a wider scope of sport and social development impact in Serbia. A detailed discussion of the contexts of the two research cases, their

organisational workings and developmental objectives will be conducted in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

Data collection methods designed, so as to best respond to the thesis's aim and specific objectives, combined a review of documentary sources, individual and group interviews, and direct observation. Albeit documentary research is an on-going process, the review of secondary and primary sources was performed prior to other forms of data collection, which served to contextualise research issues and assisted in the interview design stage.

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, ethical clearance was sought from the UCLan's BuSH Ethics Committee. The fieldwork was primarily carried out in Belgrade, Serbia from September 2012 to February 2013, with occasional visits to Serbian local communities to observe certain activities of interest. Drawing from Yin's (2009) and Amis's (2005) assertions about the relevance of research interviews in qualitative case study research, this thesis uses interviews as a pivotal research source for responding to the main research questions. Moreover, the rationale for employing interviews as the main research method draws from the flexibility of this method to adjust to the specific fieldwork situations, and to probe for more detailed and reflexive responses so as to obtain a rich set of data (Spaaij, 2011). The interviews were held with four main groups of informants: a) representatives of the GFP—officials and programme/project coordinators; b) rugby league officials, former and current players and veterans; c) representatives of state institutions concerned with sport development and representatives of civil society organisations concerned with social development; d) sport journalists, independent sport experts and professionals. While the selection of the first three groups of informants relied upon the nature of the cases selected, the fourth group of interview respondents was selected with a view of critically reflecting the connection of the sport meso contextual scene within the wider social context so as to bolster research data. Within the respective group of informants, the selection procedure was informed by both targeted selection of the key informants (Amis, 2005) and the snowball method that comprised the selection of research participants through gatekeeper recommendations including the individual snowball sampling method (Spaaij, 2011) that comprised the selection of interview respondents through contacts with research participants selected by the gatekeepers who identified potential future respondents free from the gatekeepers' jurisdiction over further sample selection.

While 61 participants took part in individual and group interviews (55 males and 6 females), in total 51 individual and 3 group interviews (or focus groups) were held (see Chapter 4). The interviews (individual and group) were semi-structured in nature allowing the interview process to balance between structure and flexibility (Gillham, 2005). Additionally, the interview schedule (see Appendix 3) was designed in order to address specific research issues, taking into consideration the affiliation of the interviewees and particular theoretical propositions used in the design of the research project. Likewise, group interviews were conducted in situations when potential interviewees were not able to meet separately, and were therefore used to complement individual interviews (Spaaij, 2011).

Finally, direct observation was employed to complement the dominant method within the multi-method scope of the research approach (Gillham, 2010). It was used to observe what people do and say, and how they interact in a particular setting (Coalter, 2008; Gillham, 2010). Direct observations were made at sport events of both case studies, seminars, and during travel to a rugby league tournament in southern Serbia. However, although the general form of this technique relied more on observation than participation, on certain occasions, informal conversation with research informants occurred spontaneously as a form of unstructured participatory activity on the part of the researcher. Thus, while this research method allowed for the broadening insights into the nature of sport activities, including the participants' social interactions on and off the pitch, it complemented, validated or challenged the evidence obtained through the employment of other methodological strategies.

The data analysis that commenced in the early stages of the fieldwork was instructed with thematic areas covered by the interview schedule, which adhered to the study's conceptual framework designed prior to entering the research field (Yin, 2009). Although conceptually structured, predefined thematic areas did not, however, hinder the emergence of new codes, categories or themes from the data as they were considered a base from which to further code and categorise the data. Therefore, the coding strategy was informed by 'concept-driven coding', yet allowing for 'data-driven' codes to emerge in order to enable new concepts to be contrived (Gibbs, 2007). The process of coding thus involved the selection of lower-level concepts that were grouped in higher-level concepts, which stood for a particular phenomenon or theme. Accordingly, the emergent themes were then grouped into theoretical constructs

consistent with the conceptual framework of the study and were utilised in writing up the research results.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of this thesis takes the form of nine chapters, including this introductory chapter. The thesis starts by unpacking the theoretical and conceptual approach for this study. *Chapter 2* thus critically discusses the social capital contemporary theoretical contributions, while positioning the current study within the particular conceptual tradition(s). The chapter proceeds by outlining the study's conceptual framework through discussion of constitutive social capital elements, their interrelations and resulting forms. In complementing the discussion within the conceptual framework orientation of the thesis, the chapter expands on the position of the concept in relation to constructs of social cohesion, social integration and inclusion and active civic participation, including an overview of the ways social capital is applied in public policy discourse in developed countries before finally elaborating on the concept's strong context-dependency characteristics while summarising existing research accounts on social capital in the Serbian context.

Following the structuring logic developed in the preceding chapter, *Chapter 3* extends the conceptual framework of the study by examining the existing accounts on the link between sport and social capital, including the manifestation of social cohesion, social integration, inclusion and active civic participation in and through sport in different contextual and policy settings. It is argued that social capital in sport is of a multifaceted nature, invoking different shares of social capital types to flow in and through sport being conditional to the micro and meso sporting and wider social contexts while sports claimed ability to instil community benefits via a range of socially cohesive processes is still contested terrain that resonates significantly with the dominant political and sport policy discourses concerned with forwarding social development through sport. Finally, some contextual background on contemporary sport development in Serbia is provided.

Chapter 4 establishes the study's methodological approach drawing from the thesis's main aim and derived objectives. It thus elaborates on the research process through which evidence was collected and analysed. The results of the preceding data analysis are then divided into four empirical chapters to follow.

Building upon the discussion of contemporary developmental perspectives of sport in Serbia charted in *Chapter 3*, the discussion in *Chapter 5* provides original insight into contemporary development of the established and emerging sports being studied (including socio-historical perspective on rugby league development) particularly centred upon their social and organisational settings. In addition, the chapter charts that, although to different degrees, the proactive approach of actors involved in the development of the researched sports to counter different financial and human resources constraints resulted in social processes that resonate with the increased use of social networks as a resource for sport development.

Chapter 6 expands the discussion in this thesis by offering an insight into the nature of social capital created in and through established and emerging sports in the context of Serbia. It therefore deconstructs patterns of relations through which connective architecture is established in and around these sports by examining the nature of social capital structural elements—social networks and their cultural fillers—trust and norms of reciprocity, while finally taking the decomposed elements characteristics and the ways social capital cultural elements are mutually interwoven and how they interact in their structural webs to build particular social capital models for the sports studied—the extent to which bonding, bridging and linking social capital are represented and how they interact in the given model. The discussion in this chapter thus provides insights into social capital creation and maintenance mechanisms that yield arguments about the highly dynamic and transferable nature of social capital in the cases researched, strongly dependent on a multitude of wider local contexts.

Following on from the discussion about the nature of social capital in and through the grassroots football programme and rugby league, *Chapter 7* addresses the ways in which and the extent to which constructed social capital models relate to socially cohesive processes manifested through social inclusion and integration and sports volunteering created and maintained in and through the studied sports, including the ways the wider social context informs the aforementioned developments. It is argued that positive trends in volunteerism, as a form of active civic participation in sports, are associated with the degree of development of norms of reciprocity, while the developmental position of sport in the meso sporting context (emerging or established) directly resonates with the degree of norms of reciprocity, thus social capital and consequently active civic engagement will prosper with proportional ramifications for multiple community benefits. It then further argues that both programmed and non-

programmed socially inclusive and integrative processes may be induced through both bonding and bridging social capital traits—with bonding showing the potential to affect social inclusion whereas bridging may have a stake in fostering some exclusionary and discriminatory practices in and through the studied cases. Finally, an account is provided of the relevance of the specific 'transitional' and semi-peripheral social, political, economic and cultural contexts in Serbia for establishing a link between the nature of social capital and the nature of community benefits.

Chapter 8 concludes the empirical discussion in this thesis by analysing the nexus between the Serbian sport policy discourse and the representation of social capital in sport policies, including related socially cohesive constructs and the ways the explored cases facilitate the implementation of particular sport policy objectives in the domain of the social role for sport which hence makes a base from which sport policy recommendations will be drawn in the concluding chapter. It is shown that although not treated in explicit terms, the social capital concept may be derived from Serbian sport policy discourse, while the terms of (national) cohesion, social inclusion and integration and sport volunteerism are advanced through their claimed abilities to assist in *sport development* often omitting to position sport in the wider social context. Finally, the analysis from the study suggests that the practices of the examined sports have extended the boundaries of the pro-social sport policy framework through the promotion of sports' potential to assist in social development and thus to respond to wider pro-social policy objectives in the realm of anti-discrimination of ethnic minorities, persons with disability and gender equality.

Finally, *Chapter 9* is the concluding chapter of this thesis that revisits the research aim and objectives while systematically providing answers to the thesis research questions. In doing so, the discussion in this chapter outlines both the theoretical and empirical original contribution of this study, accompanied by policy and future research recommendations.

A list of appendices is included at the end of the thesis, the main purpose of which is to additionally contextualise and provide supplemental information on issues covered by this study.

CHAPTER 2. Social Capital Theory and Social Capital Conceptual Determinants

2.1 Introduction

The theoretical approach of this thesis is framed by the social capital concept. Social capital theory development is expanding progressively, resulting in a vast array of literature across multiple social science disciplines. The fundamentality of issues addressed by the concept continues to attract the tremendous interest of academics and policy-makers in contemporary debates on social capital (Hutchinson, 2004). Agreement among scholars on numerous conceptual issues such as the definition of the concept, the concept's determinants and its mechanisms of operation has, however, yet to be reached (Hutchinson, 2004; Field, 2008; Onyx and Bullen, 2000). But, as pointed out by Field, consensus is made around the concept's central thesis that 'can be summed up in two words: relationships matter' (2008: 1).

The purpose of this chapter is to lay the foundations of the social capital concept via reflection on the major theoretical strains of social capital contemporary thought, while constructing a reliable conceptual framework that underpins the analysis presented in this thesis. The chapter starts, therefore, with a critical overview of the seminal theoretical contributions before providing a synthesised conceptual approach that defines the key determinants of social capital. The chapter then turns to a discussion of different forms of social capital relevant in building the study's conceptual framework before establishing a link between social capital and the concepts of social cohesion, social integration, and active civic participation, including the connection between social capital and pro-social public polices in the contexts of developed countries. In completing the view to the geometry of social capital accounted for in this study, the context-dependency of the phenomenon is interrogated before finally outlining the nature of social capital in the context of Serbian society.

2.2 Seminal Theoretical Perspectives on Social Capital

The core idea of social capital is that social networks have value (Putnam, 2000). Networks provide ground for social cohesion, civic engagement and wider social integration in society. The value of networks is reflected in their potential to engage

people in cooperation and coordination processes for mutual advantage (Field, 2008). The popularity of social capital theory in social science research is grounded in evidence that shows 'how powerfully social capital, or its absence, affects the well being of individuals, organizations, and nations' (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003: 4). The concept's popularity in academic and policy circles in recent years is basically a response to the work of political scientist Robert Putnam (1993a, 1995, 1996, 2000). However, the social capital concept does not belong in contemporary social science discourse only. Its diverse effects on societies have been recognised by a number of advocates long before its current state of popularity in the investigation of dominant social, political and economic processes. As pointed out by Putnam in his book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* the concept of social capital had various interpretations during the twentieth century but each interpretation pointed to the importance of social ties in enhancing the productivity of people's lives (Putnam, 2000: 19). Most authors agree (e.g. Farr, 2004; Field, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000), however, that the first known systematic use of the term 'social capital' was by Lyda J. Hanifan, who recognised the importance of social network development in the community for successful schools (Hanifan, 1916; Putnam, 2000: 19). Still, as further indicated by Robert Putnam 'Hanifan's account of social capital anticipated virtually all of the crucial elements of later interpretations of this concept, but his conceptual invention apparently attracted no notice from other social commentators and disappeared without a trace' (ibid.). While the concept has been reinvented a couple of times during the period from 1950 to 1980 (Putnam, 2000), there has been overall agreement among scholars that the theory development, its wider application across different social science disciplines and its overall significance for researching social worlds, derives from the 1980s and 1990s seminal works of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam.

2.2.1 Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu's sociological approach was based on the premises of conflict theory, the structures of power and class that are produced and reproduced by social agents in specific social fields. Therefore, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital has slowly emerged from his 'wider analysis of the diverse foundations of social order' (Field, 2008). He considered that the position of an individual in a social field is primarily determined by its possession of economic capital, which consequently provides access to cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Likewise, Bourdieu

considered these forms of capital as being largely in the hands of dominant classes that occupy their respective social positions (Lin, 2001). Although Bourdieu's focus was on economic capital and its reproduction, he clearly states that it is impossible to understand the social world without introducing other forms of capital, referring to cultural and social capital while pointing to the transferability of forms of capital as a process that underpin their creation (Bourdieu, 1986). As stated by Portes and Landolt (2000: 531) 'social capital of any significance can seldom be acquired without the investment of some material resources and the possession of some cultural knowledge, enabling the individual to establish relations with valued others.' Thus, Bourdieu explains the concept of social capital as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition' (1986: 248-9; 1980: 2).

Furthermore, Bourdieu underlines that the level of social capital possessed by a social agent 'depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilise and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected' (1986: 249; 1980: 2) and continues with the assertion that building social networks requires solid investment strategies, whether individual or collective that may yield further reproduction of social relationships (ibid.). Additionally, for Bourdieu, the durability and density of networks has been equally vital to the social capital concept, which is important to note since, as we will see, not all social capital theorists support the notion that only dense and durable networks have value.

Bourdieu's treatment of the concept of social capital was primarily instrumental (Portes, 1998, 2000; Portes and Landolt, 2000) focused on the individual benefits that arise from group membership and other types of sociability created to secure resources in the form of social capital. By being a member of a formal or informal group, a social agent is allowed to use the resources possessed by his associates and in certain amounts and quality (Bourdieu, 1986, 1980).

There is no question that Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the social capital theory was ground-breaking. Critically however, while he considers social capital, and other forms of capital, as the resource of elites secured to preserve their dominant positions (Field, 2008; Lin, 2001), he does not allow for the fact that non-elite groups are able to interact

in a network, sharing interests other than the maximisation of their financial profits and material assets. Second, being concerned with individuals and small groups as units of analysis and the benefits that accrue from their interaction within the particular group, he omits to encapsulate wider networking perspectives including the benefits that may accrue from such networking at meso and macro social levels. Third, in contrast to some other seminal perspectives on the concept and, as a consequence of his instrumental approach to social capital, he did not consider trust as a constituent of social capital (Siisiäinen, 2000), neither did he take into account altruistic action as having the potential to secure social capital at the individual, group or community level. Fourth, as a result of his conceptualisation of social capital, which assumes that individuals are stepping into networks in order to secure their own benefits, he overlooks the negative externalities of social capital, as understood by sociologist Alejandro Portes, and later by political scientist Robert Putnam (Portes, 1998; Portes and Landolt, 2000; Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Goss 2002), while still acknowledging for the possibility of 'embezzlement or misappropriation of the capital' at the level of the group's representatives (Bourdieu, 1986: 251). Finally, as it has already been indicated, Bourdieu's position on the potential of dense and durable networks to secure profit in the form of social and economic capital may be regarded as one-dimensional, as he fails to include different network types in yielding social capital for individuals, groups or wider communities, the importance of which to the conceptualisation of social capital was stressed considerably more by a number of scholars in the field (e.g. Burt, 2005; Fukuyama, 2000; Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Woolcock 2001).

2.2.2 James Coleman

James Coleman, a prominent American sociologist, developed the concept of social capital from the perspective of its contribution to 'acquiring educational credentials' (Schuller et al., 2000: 6). His orientation in conceptualising social capital from rational choice theory primarily reflects the mutual interdependence between social and human capital, whereas the latter is considered as being 'created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways' (Coleman, 1988: S100), and the ability of acquired individual or group social capital to positively affect the processes of human capital reinforcement. According to Woolcock, 'rational choice theorists […] regard social capital as an informational resource emerging as a result of interaction between rational agents needing to coordinate for mutual benefit'

(1998: 155-6). In *Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital* (1988), however, Coleman asserts that his approach to social capital is somewhat general and examined in a particular context, that of education (1988: S97). For Coleman, social capital represents social structure and the facilitation of social action within this structure. Simultaneously, he refers to social capital as a useful 'resource for persons' (Coleman, 1988: S98) acquired through social relations. However, unlike economic and human capital that feature private possession and individual returns, Coleman considers social capital to be a 'public good' and a 'by-product of other social activities' (1988: S116-8). According to Coleman '[t]he public goods quality of most social capital means that it is in a fundamentally different position with respect to purposive action than are most other forms of capital' (1988: S118) and continues with the assertion that social capital is a product of an action that often benefits individuals other than the ones who produced it, thus its acquisition is, as opposed to other forms of capital, less intentional (ibid.).

Moreover, central to Coleman's conceptualisation was the fact that social relations that are integral to social capital assist in establishing obligations, expectations and trustworthiness between social actors, providing access to information channels and establishing norms and sanctions that 'can constitute [a] powerful form of social capital […] [that] facilitates certain actions, [and] constrains other[s]' (Coleman, 1988: S104-5). Furthermore, as commented by Portes (1998: 6), a particularly important aspect of Coleman's social capital approach is the 'closure' of networks, to which he refers as 'one property of social relations on which effective norms depend' (1988: S105). In other words, closure enables the employment of norms within the network, but it is simultaneously important for 'the trustworthiness of social structures that allows the proliferation of obligations and expectations' (Coleman, 1988: S107). Thus, close or dense networks, according to Coleman, are more productive in the effective employment of norms, obligations and the development of trustworthiness.

Although Coleman and Bourdieu do not refer to each other's contributions to the social capital theory, parallels between their works on social capital may to a certain extent be drawn. Namely, like Bourdieu, Coleman is concerned with the social capital that benefits individuals or small groups. However, while Bourdieu's treatment of social capital is oriented to elite groups indicating that 'privileged individuals maintain their positions by using their connections with other privileged' (Field, 2008: 31), Coleman extends this view by asserting that social capital is available to elites and non-elite

groups while treating social capital as a 'public good' and a 'by-product' that non-group members can benefit from. Finally, both scholars refer to social capital as a resource for educational advantage and the exclusive value of dense ties in social capital creation (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988).

For Robert Putnam, a political scientist who popularised the concept of social capital in academic and policy debate, James Coleman 'laid the intellectual foundations for the study of social capital and its effects' (Putnam, 2000: 302). Despite failing to account for the characteristics and types of multidimensional social networks, his work extended the scope of social capital distribution and acquisition via the inclusion of norms, obligations, trustworthiness and information channels applied in dense networks of relationships as factors immanent to social capital creation.

2.2.3 Robert Putnam

The first social capital theorist to recognise the role of sport as a formal or informal associational activity in creating and developing positive social outcomes was Robert Putnam in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000). As a proponent of the democratic strain of social capital (Adams, 2013), Putnam sees civil society organisations—formal and informal—as venues for developing and sustaining social connections that benefit individuals and communities (2000). Therefore, according to him, the active involvement in associational life of any kind suggests the level of social capital developed in a society (ibid.).

Putnam's position on social capital is grounded in an American 'progressive' intellectual tradition, to which he refers as a milestone in social capital conceptualisation. His functionalist approach to social capital frames the debate on the concept along the lines of its contribution to the 'economic and social health of the countries, regions, cities, and towns, to the success of organizations, and to individual accomplishment and well-being' (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003: 2). Therefore, Putnam's core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value, '[...] social capital refers to connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (2000: 18-9).

For Putnam, therefore, norms of reciprocity, honesty and trust are fundamental for civic engagement and social capital generation. To illustrate the interrelatedness of social capital's main elements, Putnam refers to social networks as crucial in applying 'mutual

obligations … [and] fostering sturdy norms of reciprocity' (2000: 20). According to Putnam, exercising norms of reciprocity by an individual or group contributes to the well-being of other individuals, associations or communities without expectation of immediate return, but with the prolonged expectation of benefit in the future. Furthermore, social or generalised trust, as an indispensible ingredient of social capital, and therefore civic engagement, is what 'lubricates social life' (2000: 21) and enforces mutually beneficial cooperation. Moreover, Putnam distinguishes between 'thick' and 'thin' trust arguing that thinner trust is more useful from the perspective of social capital creation since it extends 'the radius of trust beyond the roster of people whom we can know personally' (2000: 136), while thick trust is rather to remain within the boundaries of a specific social circle. Likewise, civic engagement is directly related to the level of trust and trustworthiness—the greater the level of trust developed in the community, the richer the community is in terms of civic participation, and hence in social capital. Furthermore, community to Putnam is not a restricted entity—as he puts it 'community means different things to different people' (2000: 273), therefore, comprehension of community is derived from the sense of belonging to different formal or informal social networks. Consequently, the greater level of belonging is embedded in the most intimate and dense social networks—that of family, friends and neighbourhood. Although for Putnam, dense social networks are rich in social capital, the personal stock of social capital is further extended in social networks beyond the most intimate ones, in an assortment of ''weak ties' [which], though less intimate, can be quite important collectively' (2000: 274).

A notably important alignment in Putnam's approach to social capital is that it has both an individual and a collective aspect (2000: 20), or in other words, social capital is both a 'private' and 'public' good. According to Putnam and Goss (2002: 7) 'in many instances of social capital, some of the benefit goes to bystanders, while some of the benefits serve the immediate interest of the person making the investment'. This assertion that substantially draws on Coleman's perception of social capital, further suggests that social capital is also a 'by-product' of other social activities 'developed in pursuit of a particular goal or set of goals and not for its own sake' (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003: 10). It is worth noting that there is a trend of misconception within contemporary literature on social capital (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003; Misztal, 2000; Portes, 1998; Putzel, 1997) reflected in consideration of Putnam's approach to social capital as exclusively a property of associations, communities and

even nations, overlooking his explicit reasoning of social capital as an asset that equally benefits both individuals and collectives.

Previous conceptualisation of the creation of social capital within the dense and loose social networks led Putnam to provide a clearer understanding of individual and collective social capital inherited either in the form of *bonding* (exclusive) or *bridging* (inclusive) social capital (2000: 20). According to him and to Kristin Goss, bonding social capital refers to the value assigned to dense social networks of people 'who are like one another in important respects (ethnicity, age, gender, social class and so on) whereas bridging social capital refers to value created in weak social networks that bring together people who are unlike one another' (Putnam and Goss, 2002: 11). Furthermore, from the perspective of increasing social cohesion and social integration, Putnam favours bridging social capital as its inclusionary component prevails, in comparison to the potential exclusionary character of bonding social capital that in some instances may generate excessive 'othering' practices. Yet, Putnam's account of exclusionary or negative social capital is not sufficiently conceptually persuasive, neither it is approached in a comprehensive fashion. This stems from his belief that social capital 'underpins a more productive, supporting and trusting society to [its] general benefit' (Blackshaw and Long, 2005: 242). Such an approach to the dark side of social capital has provoked large-scale criticism within the contemporary literature on social capital. Finally, although it is important to conceptually distinguish between these two forms of capital, bonding and bridging are not 'either-or' forms but 'more or less' types of social capital necessary for assessing its qualitative dimension (Putnam, 2000: 23). Broader discussion about these social capital forms is provided in section 2.4 of this chapter.

Despite Putnam's significant merit in developing the concept of social capital, including its escalating popularity within academic and policy circles, his treatment of social capital is shrouded in a range of criticism. In particular the critics have pointed to the following conceptual inconsistencies: a restrictive or distinctive methodological approach relying on secondary quantitative data in assessing the levels of social capital within the units of analysis (Bowles, 2008; Edwards and Foley, 1997; Field, 2008); an insufficiently developed concept of negative social capital (Boggs, 2001; Coalter, 2007; Misztal 2000; Portes 1998, Portes and Landolt 2000; Putzel, 1997; Spaaij, 2011; Szreter, 2002); the circularity of social capital definition (Misztal, 2000; Portes, 1998; Portes and Landolt, 2000); an underdeveloped distinction between bonding and bridging

social capital from empirical data (Blackshaw and Long, 2005); insufficiently developed debate on issues of class, power and conflict (Boggs, 2001; Putzel 1997; Schuller et al., 2000; Siisiäinen, 2000; Spaiij, 2011; Szreter, 2002); neglect of the development of vertical social ties and the role of the state in fostering social capital (Szreter, 2002).

Some of these criticisms do not remain unaddressed. In particular, in *Better Together: Restoring American Community*, Putnam and his colleague Lewis Feldstein (2003), made a considerable methodological shift in researching the potential for an increase of social capital in the United States. Following his seminal book *Bowling Alone* that marshalled extensive evidence all of which pointed to a decrease of social capital in America in the last decades of the twentieth century, the next attempt entailed approaching organisations, social movements and programmes qualitatively from within, so as to assess the potential for an increase of social capital in the selected cases. This methodological reorientation is reflected in the authors' attempts to cover the cultural aspects of social capital embedded in a complex social setting. At the same time, the shift in the methodological approach resonated with the further development of the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital and their representation in qualitative empirical data (ibid.).

Similarly, while in his early works Putnam failed to separate the definition of the concept from its supposed outcomes (Portes 1998; Portes and Landolt, 2000), the failure of which is displayed in an inability to adequately prescribe the relationship between different elements of social capital (Field, 2008: 42) as causes from the effects, the accuracy of the previous definition of social capital from *Bowling Alone* is strengthened, by referring to active participation in networks, while norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness are presented as 'powerful subordinate factors' (ibid.). Yet, on the other hand, Putnam often uses definitional elements of norms of reciprocity and trust interchangeably, failing to incorporate a conceptual distinction between these two elements and conceptualise their respective positions in defining social capital. This concept's shortcoming will be in some respects addressed by this thesis.

Moreover, although Putnam's theoretical approach does not originate from conflict theory, as does Bourdieu's, his attempt to provide a class dimension to his conceptualisation is still somewhat present in his concept. According to Szreter, Putnam recognises that 'there is an important class dimension to the distribution of social capital

in a liberal society, and particularly to the balance between bonding and bridging social capital' (2002: 576) but unlike Bourdieu, however, Putnam fails to acknowledge that the most privileged in a society also 'tend to manifest an imbalance of bonding, relative to bridging, social capital' (Szreter, 2002: 577).

On the other hand, criticism of the underdeveloped debate about negative social capital and the role of the state in social capital creation is fully credible. Yet, it is noteworthy that Putnam was primarily concerned with the prominence of bridging social capital over bonding, with the former not imposing the rules of social control and social closure that are immanent to dense social networks, thus bolstering overall positive effects of social capital, while his consideration of vertical social networking with state institutions in social capital creation, though indicated, has not been fairly conceptually developed (Putnam, 1993a; Putnam, 2000: 412-3). In addition, in his orientation to positive social ends arising from the creation of bridging social capital, Putnam has failed to account for bridging social capital traits immanent to establishing exclusionary social practices, which this research intends to address.

Putnam's social capital model provoked enormous attention from the relevant public spheres—academic and policy. His contribution to the concept's further development provoked lively discussion among intellectuals, dividing the academic community concerned with social capital issues into supporters and opponents. There are academics, however, such as for instance the sociologist Michael Woolcock (1998, 2001), who have attempted to bring to the fore the strengths and compensate for the weaknesses in Putnam's approach via the development of the concept of linking social capital—which vertically connects social strata through civil society and other institutional arrangements—and via interrogation of the role of the state in social capital creation (see Sections 2.4 and 2.6 of this chapter).

2.3 Synthesised Theoretical Approach to Social Capital

The key objectives of this study that intend to determine the role and place of social capital in sport defined in terms of its structural (networks) and cultural aspects (trust, norms and values) and the extent it affects socially cohesive processes at micro, meso and macro levels (i.e. those of sport organisations, the broader community and society); and the application and formation of the concept of social capital in public policy mechanisms, instruct the use of Robert Putnam's social capital theoretical orientation

including complementing conceptual treatment of social capital by sociologist Michael Woolcock. These two approaches have purchase for this thesis in at least four instances. First, this study is oriented to the 'collective' as a unit of analysis, while not underestimating the level of the 'individual'. Second, it looks at processes of the formation of different types of social capital within the networks of analysis as suggested by Putnam and Woolcock—that of bonding, bridging and linking, embedded in cultural social capital contexts, considering social capital as both an intended as well as a by-product of social relations engagements. Third, the place of the concept of social capital in public policy and the role of the state in facilitating social capital creation and distribution is an issue this thesis sets out to tackle. Finally, it approaches the concept of social capital as a highly context dependent variable accounting for sets of contextual backgrounds in alienating specific social capital models.

Synthesising the concept of social capital and defining its key constituents is indispensible for the particular conceptual clarity. In order to meet this challenge it is intended here to define and typify structural and cultural elements of social capital theory, finely tailored to best address the research questions, while proposing the study's conceptual framework. Also, the 'sociocultural component of social capital that provides the context within which it acquires meaning and becomes available to individuals or groups' (Edwards and Foley, 1997: 671) is precisely what is to be analysed in this study.

Namely, the conceptual framework for this thesis, is set to include three interconnected elements—*networks, trust and norms of reciprocity—that constitute social capital immanent to socially cohesive processes—i.e. social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation.*

Hence, existing social capital in a certain social structure may, therefore, be a source of socially cohesive processes in society, while simultaneously these same cohesive engagements may further enhance stocks of social capital.

2.3.1 Networks

A large and growing body of social capital literature has investigated the role of networks in generating social capital and interdependencies between social relations, trust and norms that reside in networks or are recreated by activities within the network. Social networks analysis points to a relationship between different social actors, the

models and implications of these connections, with the key preposition of interdependency of actors and actions, while connectedness between participants represents channels for exchange of different resources, both material and cultural (Schuller et al., 2000: 19; Scott, 1991). Therefore, according to Carrasco et al.:

> Social networks are […] composed by two key components: *actors,* who represent different entities (e.g., groups, organisations, as well as persons); and *relationships,* which represent flows of resources between them (e.g., control, dependence, co-operation, information interchange, and competition). (2008: 565)

However, it is not the intention here to extensively discuss the theory of social networks, but to indicate the relevance of the network as a structural element of the concept of social capital and select different types of networks that correspondingly produce different kinds of social capital.

For Putnam, as well as for a certain number of other social capital advocates (e.g. Bourdieu, 1986; Briggs, 1998, 2004; Coleman, 1988; Light, 2004; Portes, 1998; Portes and Landolt, 2000; Rohe, 2004; Woolcock, 1998, 2004; Woolcock and Narayan 2000;), social ties embedded in social networks are the key constituents of social capital. Networks create value, both individual and collective, being not only arenas for investment but also having a consumption value (Putnam and Goss, 2002: 15). Therefore, '[s]ociety as a whole benefits enormously from the social ties forged by those who choose connective strategies in pursuit of their particular goals' (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003: 269). According to these accounts, social capital predominantly relies on the importance of social interactions, mostly regarded as participation in various types of associational activities whether formal or informal, that create a vast array of values and norms (Stolle, 2003). Furthermore, a dynamic approach to the development of social relations is required in order to analyse the complexities of intersection and overlapping circles of different kinds of social networks that reinforce norms and values. The 'multistrandedness' of social networks is exactly what characterises the dynamic processes of intersection and overlapping of network circles (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003: 291). Accordingly, it is possible to extract various types of social networks and relate them to the kind of social capital they produce, but a sharp distinction is not possible due to the dynamic network characteristics embedded in their intersections and cross-cutting features.

According to Burt, '[network] analysis separates the pattern of connections in a network, who is connected to whom, from the substance that flows through the connections. The pattern is form. The substance is content' (2005: 50).

There are at least four forms, or patterns of connectivity that can be extracted from the literature. The forms of social networks include *formal versus informal social networks*; *strong versus weak ties*; *horizontal versus vertical networks*; *bonding versus bridging networks* (Burt, 2005; Crossley, 2008; Granovetter, 1973, 1985; Lin, 2001; Pichler and Wallace, 2007; Putnam, 1993a, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000;). Yet, distinctions between network types or patterns of network structure are not mutually exclusive as they represent complementary frames for understanding the structural aspects of social capital. Besides, it is commonly heralded across a range of social capital literature oriented to the structural features of social capital that a particular type of network corresponds to the form of social capital created within the network or, on the other hand, a network is to some extent referred to as a proxy for social capital (e.g. Crossley, 2008; Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 1993a, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002). For the purpose of this analysis, in the sections that follow, the distinction between the first three forms of network will be made while tied to types of social capital particularly of interest for this study—bonding, bridging and linking.

Formal and Informal Networks

The distinction between formal and informal networks (and social capital) in the current academic debate implies an issue of associational membership. Namely, in his early works, Putnam considered civic engagement in formal associations such as sport clubs, choral societies or mutual aid societies, as a form of social capital (1993a). While discussing the development of Italian regions, he suggests factors that affect the increasing development of certain regions. These are strongly related to the degree of developed 'civicness' within the communities. Furthermore, as Putnam claims, at the core of civic heritage are rich networks of organised reciprocity and civic solidarity (1993a: 3). Therefore, formal networks of civic engagement were the measure of the level of social capital created within a community. In addition, Putnam in his later works, not only centred the idea of social capital around civic participation as a form of formal social engagement that either enhances or creates social capital, but also extended his thesis of social engagement into informal types of networks, that of informal sport gatherings, family, friendship, or neighbourhood (Putnam, 1995, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003). However, his focus largely remained on social capital generated in the community and society as a result of participation in formal networks as indicators of the level of social capital created

within a society. In addition, formal social networks are instrumental in the production of generalised trust or social trust (Pichler and Wallace, 2007), which jointly assists in the creation of bridging social capital within the unit of analysis.

On the other hand, informal networks constitute informal social capital that resides in informal groups, for example that of friends, family, colleagues and neighbour groups. Unlike Putnam, Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988) have been concerned with these types of social networks where the advantages of networking for the individual were of central concern (Pichler and Wallace, 2007). Moreover, according to Lin, social networks that generate social capital are rather of an informal character with 'little or no formality in delineating positions and rules and in allocating authority to participants' (2001: 38). Hence, informal social networking is therefore tied to the instilment of particularised trust and norms of reciprocity (Pichler and Wallace, 2007), which, as it will be shown in the following sections, corresponds to the characteristics of bonding social capital (Putnam, 2000).

Strong and Weak Ties

Sociologist Mark Granovetter first classified social network dimensions according to the strength of ties developed among social actors (1973). According to him the strength of the tie refers to a combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and reciprocal services, which characterise the tie (Granovetter, 1973: 1361). Strong ties refer to dense social relations and frequency of contacts among social actors, such as those connections that exist within the family or a close group of friends (Bhandari and Yasunobu, 2009; Putnam and Goss, 2002). On the other hand, weak ties refer to social relations that emerge in weak networks, characterised by less frequent contact and intensity. Weak ties are of central interest to Granovetter. He contends that weak ties contribute to better individual and community success and increased social mobility (1973). For instance, better results in finding jobs are obtained through the employment of weak ties rather than those ties found in strong tied groups. Furthermore, weak ties may increasingly contribute to a better connected society and to building broad norms of generalised reciprocity (Putnam and Goss, 2002: 18). Weak ties bridge different levels of social connectivity and have a broader impact on social cohesion and integration as well as civic participation at the meso and macro social levels, thus as it will be discussed in subsequent sections, these types of social ties are instilled in the bridging and linking social capital classifications. In contrast, strong ties are probably more effective for purposes such as increased social support and social

insurance, thus are instrumental in creating stocks of bonding social capital. As is the case with other forms of networks (and social capital), overlapping momentum equally resides in both categories of network typology.

Horizontal and Vertical Networks

In the creation of social capital, networks may be classified as horizontal and vertical (Putnam, 1993a, 1995; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). The network-based social capital perspective 'stresses the importance of vertical as well as horizontal associations between people, and relations within and among other organisational entities' (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000: 230). Thus, a horizontal network is developed among network members of similar positions of power and status, while vertical social networks constitute social relations of unequal power positions (Bhandari and Yasunobu, 2009). Horizontal networking that creates social capital is closely related to the bonding and bridging categories' distinction. This more nuanced perspective on forms of social capital suggests that bonding and bridging forms of social capital may be commonly accounted for by horizontal networking that serves for pursuing different ranges of common community goals via various forms of civic engagement, while vertical networks of group and individual associations refer to linking social capital, a form that vertically connects social actors of different levels of power positions through formal, hierarchical structures.

2.3.2 Trust and Norms of Reciprocity

Along with networks as a structural component, trust is another key component of the social capital concept, but from a cultural angle. Trust refers to a willingness to believe in somebody's action, in a certain social context, as being appropriate and pursued in a mutually supportive manner (Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 1995; Herreros, 2004; Misztal, 1996; Onyx and Bullen, 2000). According to Fukuyama 'trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of the members of that community' (1995: 26). Therefore, trust is basically, a firm expectation about preferences of other people (Herreros, 2004:8).

Considerable contribution to the development of the concept of social capital through the lenses of its cultural dimension—trust, was made by Francis Fukuyama. He defined social capital in terms of trust: 'the ability of the people to work together for common

purposes in groups and organizations' (1995:10). For Fukuyama, it is interpersonal trust that facilitates social relations for mutual benefit. Central to his theory of social capital is that he provided a single, straightforward means to measure social capital: the proportion of people who think that 'most people can be trusted' (Bhandari and Yasunobu, 2009: 489).

According to Putnam and Feldstein, 'trust is a sociological breeder reactor' (2003: 289) and trustworthiness is what lubricates social life (Putnam, 2000: 21). The distinction between trust and trustworthiness can be drawn on the basis of 'whether people trust others; and whether people are trustworthy' (OECD, 2001: 41). Moreover, trust may be a proxy for trustworthiness, but trustworthiness refers to behaviour that results from multiple relations among factors including networks, norms and values (ibid.).

Three primary forms of trust can be extracted from the literature—particularised or thick trust, social or generalised trust and political trust. Particularised trust is trust in people we know, while 'social or generalized trust is trust in unknown people about whom no information about their trustworthiness is available' (Herreros, 2004: 21). Particularised or thick trust is therefore embedded in strong, frequent personal relations while nested in a rather informal and dense social network (Putnam, 2000: 136). Likewise, particularised trust developed within a network mainly refers to mechanisms of how social capital can be created as a by-product of other activities (Herreros, 2004: 27).

Social or generalised trust is a form of trust that is central to Putnam's social capital model. Putnam's argument that supports the centrality of social trust to social capital generation is that 'thin trust extends the radius of trust beyond the roster of people whom we can know personally' (2000: 136). Extension of the radius of trust implicitly increases the stock of social capital. In addition, according to Putnam (1993a, 1995, 2000), the method for transforming thick trust to thin or social trust and spreading its radius is through participation in (formal and informal) networks of civic engagement.

> Social trust […] is strongly associated with many other forms of civic engagement and social capital. Other things being equal, people who trust their fellow citizens volunteer more often, contribute more to the charity, participate more often in politics and community organizations […] and display many other forms of civic virtue. […] In short, people who trust others are all-round good citizens, and those engaged in community life are both more trusting and more trustworthy. (Putnam, 2000: 136-7)

Finally, political trust is what constitutes trust in the formal system, the government and social institutions. Yet this form of trust is not in the very foci of Putnam's social capital

conception. Political trust, according to Putnam, may or may not be correlated to social trust, but theoretically, it needs to be kept separate from social trust (2000: 137). However, this thesis also looks at social capital that may be generated in vertical networks created between individuals and groups and governmental institutions, accepting Woolcock's concept of linking social capital and therefore takes institutional or political trust as relevant in the analysis of vertical linkages within the cases selected for this study. In addition, it is worth noting that particular forms of trust constitute a particular type of social capital (see Section 2.4).

Literature on social capital is divided along the lines of whether trust is a source or an outcome of social capital or whether it is both—source and outcome. Moreover, although it is not explicitly stressed, Putnam's concept of social capital suggests that social trust is both a source and an outcome of social interactions and, therefore, social capital. As it has been noted earlier in this chapter, this is a point of great criticism of his approach, defined as logical circularity, notably fleshed out by sociologist Alejandro Portes (1998). However, although it is important from a theoretical point of view to distinguish the main elements of social capital, its sources and outcomes, it is accepted here that trust may be regarded as both a source and outcome of social capital because, as a source, existing trust in a network facilitates the generation of social capital and further extends the level of trust now in the form of an outcome of social relations. Therefore, whether source, outcome or both, trust in all its forms is an inherently reinforcing element of social capital and this perspective is to be accounted for in the present study.

Along with trust, *norms of reciprocity* represent another key cultural component of social capital. Yet, literature on social capital rarely comprehensively and precisely addresses the notion of reciprocity, most probably due to the high level of ambiguity of this normative category. Nonetheless, it is possible to account for reciprocity as a relational category embedded in an expectation of return over the short or long-term period (e.g. Gouldner, 1960; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Troche and Valenzuela, 2011). Reciprocity refers to acting for the benefit of others at short-term personal cost, having a general expectation that the service will be returned at some time in the future if needed (Onyx and Bullen, 2000: 24). This is a form of a social dimension to inter-personal relations (Troche and Valenzuela, 2011). Furthermore, as Troche and Valenzuela assert, reciprocity is at the same time both a voluntary and strictly obligatory category of continual exchange based on obligations to give, to receive and

to reciprocate (ibid.). It is, therefore an act of *support* and an exchange of supportive norms throughout networks of social relations.

Putnam's concept of social capital stresses norms of reciprocity as an indispensable ingredient reflected in its generalisability. According to him, norms of *generalised* reciprocity are a cornerstone of the concept of social capital, which are enforced by the networks of community engagement (Putnam, 2000). The existence of norms of generalised reciprocity undoubtedly affects the efficiency and prosperity of communities:

> A society characterized by generalized reciprocity is more efficient than a distrustful society, for the same reason that money is more efficient than barter. If we don't have to balance every exchange instantly, we can get a lot more accomplished. (Putnam, 2000: 21)

Yet, from an analytical point of view, Putnam often confounds trust, honesty and reciprocity (2000), failing to precisely account for the relevance of particular elements in social capital creation.

Moreover, although not of particular interest to Putnam, norms of particularised reciprocity are usually tied to thick forms of particularised trust referring to provision of support to people we know and with whom we interact often in particular (mostly informal and dense) social networks (2000).

Both norms of reciprocity and trust may be embedded in different forms of social networks. For instance, norms of particularised reciprocity and particularised trust are embedded in dense, mostly informal networks (e.g. Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Troche and Valenzuela, 2011) while social trust and norms of generalised reciprocity are implicit in loose networks, mostly formal in character, which connect social actors along horizontal and vertical channels of cooperation. The latter form of trust and norms of reciprocity is exactly what Putnam describes as a mechanism that bolsters social capital at the community and society level. Finally, in attempts to foster processes of social cohesion, social integration, social inclusion and civic engagement as features of good democracy and social health, accounting for social trust and generalised reciprocity that proliferate the radius of different kinds of cooperation through society as a whole, is indispensable. However, a multidimensional concept of social capital suggests a complex nexus between key social capital elements that participate in the creation of different types of social capital, and related socially cohesive processes. It is vital, therefore, to distinguish between them in order to capture the nature of social

capital in particular social settings, such as those of sport organisations, activities and programmes central to this study.

2.4 Types of Social Capital

The currently available literature on social capital provides different forms and dimensions of social capital, in attempts to develop theoretically coherent and empirically reliable classification of the concept (Putnam and Goss, 2002). However, the theory of social capital, being still in its infancy, does not provide for a unified classification of social capital but rather offers mutually overlapping conceptual distinctions. In this vein, regarded structurally, classification of social capital types is often equated with social network classification as discussed in Section 2.3.1 of this chapter. Although social capital classifications of formal *versus* informal social capital (Pichler and Wallace, 2007; Putnam and Goss, 2002), thick *versus* thin ties (Putnam and Goss, 2002), horizontal *versus* vertical social capital (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000), regularly emerge in contemporary social capital literature across social science disciplines, the distinction between *bonding*, *bridging* and *linking* social capital comes to the fore in setting up theoretical propositions for this study. Hence, priority for assessing the nature of social capital in the researched sports is given to the forms of social capital categorised from social cohesion, including the civic participation and institutional interaction perspectives.

2.4.1 Bonding, Bridging and Linking Social Capital

The most common forms of social capital repeatedly reported in the literature are bonding and bridging social capital (e.g. Briggs, 1998; Gittell and Vidal, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Rohe 2004; Vidal, 2004). The distinction between bonding and bridging social capital has been developed from Granovetter's strong and weak ties concept, first by Gittell and Vidal (1998). However, as we have seen earlier, Robert Putnam was the one who brought this significant conceptual distinction between forms of social capital to scholarly attention. The distinction between bonding and bridging social capital is made from the perspective of social cohesion, emphasising the ability of dynamic social networks to act in an inclusionary and/or exclusionary manner.

Bonding social capital refers to social networks built around perceived and shared identity relations (Szreter, 2002: 576). Namely, bonding social capital brings together people who are like one another from the perspective of social class, ethnicity, age, gender, education, religion, etc. Bonding social capital, therefore, operates in terms of a mirroring-effect—membership in a network is secured for those 'like us' and no further justification is required for assumption that trust and cooperation will be developed among group members. Likewise, this type of social capital is related to particularised trust, mainly but not exclusively to informal, strong and horizontal social networks and specific or particularised reciprocity. Therefore, bonding social capital mainly affects social relations within the group, fostering group cohesion and its cooperation mechanisms, while the effects of bonding social capital to the wider community, and to those who are outsiders may, to some extent and in some circumstances, depending on the micro, meso and macro social context, be negative and reflected in different levels of social exclusion (Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002). Although bonding social capital could potentially be responsible for initiating negative social externalities, from the perspective of the individual it provides a greater level of social support, while from the perspective of the group it enhances values of trust and reciprocity and may also be neutral to outsiders.

Bridging social capital, by contrast, refers to networks of associations, cooperation and coordination among people that do not necessarily share the same social identity, origins or status in society (Szreter, 2002). Therefore, individuals that participate in networks are drawn from a diverse set of backgrounds that engage in network activity for both private and collective interest that cannot be achieved in a network characterised by bonded solidarity (ibid.). Accordingly, it is bridging social capital that fosters socially cohesive endeavours and civic engagement in formal, weak and horizontal networks of social relations by sustaining mechanisms of social trust and generalised reciprocity (Putnam, 2000). This type of social capital is of particular interest to scholars like Putnam whose central interest resides in bolstering civic participation and reconnection of social actors through mechanisms of integrative action. According to Putnam and Feldstein, 'bridging social capital is especially important for reconciling democracy and diversity' (2003: 279). In the same vein, Briggs argues that in societies characterised by a high degree of diversity, bridging social capital is particularly crucial for spreading civic and social identities, sustaining and reconciling ethnic, religious and class differences (2004: 154). These are, however,

the same reasons that make bridging social capital harder to create. The process of generating bridging social capital requires, therefore, social capital development strategies that reach across diverse social, cultural, economic and political divisions (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003).

In further conceptualising the forms of social capital, Michael Woolcock, as it was discussed earlier, has added a subcategory of bridging social capital termed *linking social capital*. This form of social capital is created in vertical connections between social networks and institutional representatives and is fostered by social and/or political trust and the development of norms of reciprocity. Linking social capital connects dissimilar people in diverse situations, enabling members of a community to increase the stock of resources within the community (Woolcock, 1998). According to Woolcock, 'the capacity to leverage resources, ideas, and information from formal institutions beyond the community is a key function of linking social capital' (2001: 12). Hence, the links in linking social capital are between community members and formal (state) institutions that directly or indirectly affect the community and its members (Talbot and Walker, 2007: 483). Furthermore, as Woolcock asserts, through its policies at different levels, the state may create positive incentives for vibrant and progressive civil society (1998: 157). Therefore, as Talbot and Walker argue, 'linking social capital should form a conduit between the formal infrastructure and the informal loose networks at community level described in bridging social capital' (2007: 490). Situating social networks developed within the community in a broader institutional context is indispensible for understanding their mechanisms of operation and relations with community life in general (Woolcock, 2001). Therefore, it is significant to understand mutually interdependent relationships between the state or various institutional agents and the society, notably reflected in their linking relations.

Finally, and crucially for this study, a multi-dimensional approach allows for an argument to be made that it is different combinations of bonding, bridging and linking social capital that are responsible for the array of outcomes—for instance, the creation or impediment of various socially cohesive processes—with the incorporation of context dependent components that change over time (Woolcock, 2001).

2.5 The Link between Social Capital and Socially Cohesive Processes

Interdependencies between social capital and social cohesion, integration and civic engagement are at the very centre of this analysis, taking into account the multidimensionality of these relations. The primary focus of this research is, however, centred on the dynamic processes of the formation of social capital followed by analysis of social capital generation externalities—positive and/or negative—relating to the broader social processes of cohesion and integration. This implies a necessity to conceptually encompass what is understood by social cohesion, social integration, social inclusion and civic engagement.

2.5.1 Social Cohesion, Social Integration and Social Inclusion

Consensus in the literature on the conceptual clarity of social cohesion, social integration, and social inclusion has yet to be achieved. The concepts differ in many respects, depending on the unit of analysis, indicators, theoretical approaches and policy-making directions. However, an attempt will be made in setting up the conceptual logic for this study to offer general determinants for these categories, indicating mechanisms of interrelation existent between them.

Literature on *social cohesion* offers various formal definitions. Yet, from the macro social perspective, there is broad consensus on a conceptual vision of social cohesion. Namely, social cohesion generally 'assumes there are certain societal-level conditions and processes that characterise a well-functioning society' (Jenson, 1998: 3). In this view, *social cohesion is a state of affairs that enables processes of cooperation and collaboration at various levels of society in achieving collective goals* (e.g. Cheong et al., 2007; Easterly et al., 2006; Jeannotte, 2008; Jenson, 1998; Ritzen, 2001; Spoonley et al., 2005). From a social development perspective, social cohesion stands for social solidarity, meaningful identity and participation that, according to Rončević, leads to more balanced macro development by providing a sense of identity to collectives and the performance thereof (2002: 20). Moreover, according to some commentators, social cohesion is an aggregate of social capital at the society level—the sum of created social capital at the community or group level (e.g. Easterly et al., 2006: 106). In other words, 'social capital appears to be one of those investments that a society needs to make in order to guarantee downstream revenue pay-offs in the form of social cohesion' (Jeannotte, 2003: 6). Thus, in a dominant view, social cohesion is largely founded on

the concept of social capital (Choeng, et al., 2007; Forrest and Kearns, 2001). This dominant view is also supported by the works of Robert Putnam whose conceptual approach to social capital is built on the idea of social cohesion as the general aim for which society and governments should strive in achieving positive societal ends. As stated earlier, however, social capital cannot be regarded as the sole component of social cohesion—the necessity for differing concepts of social capital and social cohesion, would not, therefore, be imposed—but as one of the main elements that constitute the social cohesion concept. This said, the main elements of social cohesion, as suggested by Beauvais and Jenson, are a) common values and a civic culture; b) social order and social control; c) social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities; d) social networks and social capital; and e) territorial belonging and identity (2002: 2). The conceptual approach to social cohesion will differ, therefore, based on the elements that it incorporates.

Although the literature on social cohesion has not sufficiently provided justifiable answers on relevant social cohesion concept issues, such as those related to the inputs and outcomes of socially cohesive societies, there have been still successful attempts to raise the level of analytical clarity of this concept. Namely, the Department of Canadian Heritage within the Canadian government, has developed a comprehensive social cohesion model consisting of multiple inputs to social cohesion such as government policies, along with functional institutions, norms and values, active civil society and social and cultural capital as important components of this system. Interaction between these elements creates social and economic outcomes that further reinforce mechanisms of generation and distribution of social cohesion (Jeannotte, 2008). Besides, increasing levels of social cohesion affects greater adherence to social norms, increasing social and political trust, better institutional functioning, increased civic participation and, thus, stocks of social capital which in turn enables increasing efficiency of economic, social and cultural outcomes (ibid.).

It is worth noting that in the past two decades the concept of social cohesion has come to the forefront of political discussion about ways to modernise the architecture of social and economic policies in developed and developing countries (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002: 30). The concept of social cohesion has helped governments to shift away from single-focus policies such as poverty reduction, employment and discrimination of deprived social actors, to integrated policy concepts that encompass a wide range of challenges indispensible for functional democratic systems, to which the concept of

social cohesion proved to be fully applicable (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002; Council of Europe, 2010). In that regard, the European Union has made a significant contribution to discussions about social cohesion and its application to the European social policy model (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2003). Similarly, the Council of Europe (hereafter as CoE), as an international organisation dedicated to fostering cooperation in Europe through the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, indicates in its *New Strategy on Social Cohesion* that social cohesion is 'the capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members—minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation—to manage differences and divisions and ensure the means of achieving welfare for all members' (2010: 2.) Furthermore, social cohesion policies from within the CoE policy framework are based on concepts of social exclusion/inclusion, social integration and increased civic participation, while the role of the state and civil society is seen as crucial in fostering socially cohesive processes.

Academic and policy discourses imply, therefore, the interrelation and circular dependency between social cohesion and social capital at multiple levels. As reported in the majority of the literature, this relationship is on the whole positive, notably in relation to the categories of bridging and linking social capital. Therefore, this study investigates whether the types of social capital created in the researched activities affect social cohesion processes at multiple communities' levels via social integration, social inclusion and active civic participation endeavours.

Social integration, as a sub-concept of social cohesion, has received very little attention in the literature, but has often been used in policy making discourse to refer to socially responsible, stable, just and tolerant societies (Jeannotte, 2008). According to Ravanera, social integration is an individual-level manifestation of social cohesion (2008). Likewise, as Ravanera and Fernando assert, social integration refers to the degree of individual attachment to the society (2009: 1). The concept of social integration is used particularly in the immigrant integration policies of developed multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies. Unlike economic and political integration, social integration policies mainly stress the cultural integration component as indispensible for individual integration into the society (Jeannotte, 2008).

The link between social capital and social integration, viewed as a sense of recognition and belonging, is twofold. Namely, culturally and ethnically homogenous networks predominantly feature dense social ties, known as bonding social capital, which enable

a greater level of social and economic support but often entail limitations to cooperation with groups of people outside the network. Bonding social capital, therefore, may further enhance socially disintegrative processes by impeding social mobility and excluding individuals from information available to mainstream society (Ravanera, 2008). On the other hand, the interrelation between social capital and social integration refers to the implementation of policies that relate to the political participation of minority communities. This relationship may, therefore, be positive if there is a greater level of political and civic participation of minorities in the social affairs of dominant groups (ibid.). However, as the type and manifestation of social capital is context dependent, the interdependencies of social capital and social integration processes may differ significantly in different contexts. More social capital will not necessarily lead to better social integration processes. As Cheong et al. advocate, the potential impact of social capital on social cohesion and social integration will fluctuate 'depending on the ways in which its effects are enhanced or diminished by the wider social, political, economic and cultural environment' (2007: 42).

Finally, *social inclusion/exclusion*, as another sub-concept of social cohesion, is closely related to social capital in its underpinning logic, which in general terms assumes wider social participation that enables individuals to achieve positive social, economic and political ends. At the core of the concept of social inclusion/exclusion is participation and access to citizens' rights. The concept of social inclusion/exclusion refers to 'the lack of access to […] a range of citizen rights […] and also a lack of social integration, through limited power, or ability to participate in political decision-making' (Shortall, 2008: 451). In dominant academic and policy discourse, however, social inclusion/exclusion has long been linked to the social dimensions of poverty and economic vulnerability. Therefore, the main concern in academic and policy discussions is about challenging the social consequences of exclusion based on poverty—the values, attitudes and resultant behaviour of excluded social actors (Williams, 2006).

Recent discussions about social inclusion/exclusion are, however, characterised by a shift from the concept's economic focus to a multi-dimensional model that, in addition to economic dimensions, also incorporates cultural, relational, participatory, political and structural dimensions (Jeannotte, 2008). The multiple cornerstones of the concept of social inclusion/exclusion, such as valued recognition of differences, human development, participation and engagement, proximity and material wellbeing (Laidlaw Foundation, 2002), imply that the engagement and active participation of deprived

social actors and their interrelation with policy structures are at the core of the contemporary social inclusion agenda. This is the point where the social capital and social inclusion/exclusion concepts reach mutual interdependency—social inclusion of deprived categories of the population may be fostered by active participation in social networks outside the realm of the vulnerable groups' immediate networks.

Interest in the issues of social inclusion/exclusion within the realm of social policy discourse gained gradual currency during the last decade of the twentieth century. For instance, the CoE's framework for combating social exclusion is primarily based on the dominant view that economic deprivation is at the heart of social exclusion, which consequently affects social deprivation (CoE, 2001). However, the CoE approach to issues of social inclusion/exclusion has progressed by recognising the centrality of social networks in meeting socially inclusive policy priorities, strongly implying a positive role for social capital in fostering social inclusion processes. In this regard, recent European Commission and CoE social inclusion policy approaches have shifted from universal to targeted policies, the central idea of which reveals the value of social networks and social capital for a vulnerable group's or an individual's social (re)integration. Namely, the policy approach of the CoE indicates that processes of social exclusion are intensified by general developments in society, but are, along with other factors such as high demands on skills and flexibility in the labour market, notably affected by the lack of social networks and deteriorating communities around deprived individuals. Therefore, the dominant trend in social policy making in developed European countries is concentrated around the aim of (re)establishing certain kinds of networks around vulnerable groups, which may further foster the process of integration (CoE, 2001: 27).

In summary, although there is a certain degree of ambiguity among the above-presented concepts, the common conceptual logic that revolves around social cohesion and its sub-concepts of social integration and social inclusion is centred around active social participation, the fostering of partnerships and network development among and around multiple social actors at different levels of social engagement, strongly relying on the concept of social capital.

2.5.2 Civic Engagement in a Social Capital Perspective

Social capital theorists of a democratic conceptual strain have been treating civic engagement as one of the main indices of the level of social capital generated within a society. Consequently, the notion of civic engagement and, notably, civic participation is considered, as has been shown earlier, to be one of the main pillars of socially cohesive processes. Engagement in formal and informal networks is seen, therefore, as a 'key indication of a socially healthy, engaged and equal society' (Shortall, 2008: 451). Putnam, in *Bowling Alone,* investigated social capital landscapes across the United States through the prism of civic engagement processes, suggesting that social capital and civic engagement are interrelated in aspects of both inputs and outcomes (2000). Broadly speaking, for Putnam civic engagement is imbued with political participation, civic participation, religious participation, informal social connections among friends and family and in the workplace, small group participation, social movements and volunteering (2000: 32-180). However, pride of place in underpinning relations between social capital and civic engagements belongs, according to Putnam, to *civic participation*, which represents its key constituent gradually affecting social capital distribution at the community level (ibid.). For Putnam, civic participation understood as 'official membership in formal organisations is only one facet of social capital, but it is usually regarded as a useful barometer of community involvement' (2000: 49). From the methodological point of view, Putnam was inclined to rely on membership in formal organisations as a valid indicator of the level of social capital rather than on the number of voluntary organisations, which are according to him not reliable indicators of trends in social capital (2000: 53). Moreover, he was concerned with the issue of *active participation* in formal organisations as a core indicator of civic involvement and consequently the level of social capital (2000: 58). In addition, according to Wuthnow, active membership, seen as active civic participation, is significant 'because actual participation generally brings people into contact with one another, creates trust, and permits specific goals to be pursued' (2002: 71).

On the other hand, it is often unclear what is credited for civic participation in Putnam's theoretical approach to social capital. In some aspects civic participation is equal to the majority of forms of civic engagement, in another it relates more to certain forms of political engagement or volunteering activities. However, drawing on a wider spectrum of Putnam's works, *active involvement in civic associations of all sorts that characterise organised community life and contribute to social well-being is what is*

meant by civic participation (Putnam, 1993a, 1996, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003). Simply put, civic participation is an activity that draws individuals out of their private lives and into civil society (Klofstad, 2011: 29), whereas the latter is understood as a concept of the commons, which according to the CIVICUS Civil Society Index is defined as an 'arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market where people associate to advance common interests' (Volkhart, 2004: 13). Therefore, civil society is the circle that entails the public sphere of people's interaction for common benefit. Moreover, in a social capital perspective, civil society is 'the breeding ground for social trust' (Rothstein, 2002: 295).

In addition, the significance of civic participation and its relationship to social capital is reflected in the facilitation of democratic processes within society (Putnam, 1993a, 2000). In his earlier analysis of the democratic performance of Italian regional governments, Putnam supports the thesis that better democratic performance is strongly correlated with the level of social capital embedded in developed civil society traditions (1993b). Namely, the regions characterised with a vital civil society, seen as a social arena of active civic participation, are also those whose regional governments and institutions perform better than those whose civil society lacks robustness. In Putnam's volumes, therefore, attention is to a greater extent devoted to the research of voluntary associations, while 'associational membership has become a standard litmus test for the health of society's social capital' (Stolle and Hooghe, 2005: 152). In communities and societies with strong and horizontally diffuse civil society embedded in networks of civic associations 'there is a spill over from membership in organisations to the cooperative values and norms that citizens develop' (Stolle, 2003: 23), whereas in areas of underdeveloped networks of civic participation, the lack of civic attitudes and trust in institutions underpinning democratic governance gradually resides (ibid.). Therefore, civic associations, according to communitarian tradition, contribute to better socialising effects for the common benefit of their members, which consequently positively affects the development of trust, cooperation and reciprocity mechanisms within the realm of civic engagement as a whole (Stolle, 2003; Stolle and Hooghe, 2005). Moreover, these mechanisms of cooperation and civic activity in the public sphere are extended to vertical connections between civil society and the state institutions through which civic activists 'demand, and thus tend to get, better policies from the state' (Klofstad, 2011: 30). In this account, a positive relationship between active civic participation, on the one hand, and the level of social capital generated within the community, on the other, is

supported by empirical evidence in Putnam's and his colleagues studies, as indicated above.

Although some literature suggests that there are limitations in the empirical evidence that sustains the argument about the positive input/outcome relationship between social capital, active civic participation and better democratic governance performance results (e.g. Schudson, 2006; Stolle, 2003; Theiss-Morse and Hibbing, 2005; Wollebak and Selle, 2003), there exists a vast array of social capital studies indicating that active civic participation in formal and informal associations increases face-to-face social interactions between their members, enhances levels of particularised and generalised trust and facilitates democratic action (e.g. Cattel, 2004; Fukuyama, 2000, 2001; Hall, 2002; Herreros, 2004; Hyman, 2002; Onyx and Bullen, 2000; Pirce 2002; Putnam, 1993a, 1996, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Skocpol, 1999, 2002; Wuthnow, 2002). As Stolle stipulates, civic associations contribute 'to the building of a society in which cooperation between all people for all sorts of purposes not just within the groups themselves—is facilitated' (2003: 25), stressing the overall socially positive aspects of social capital embodied in networks of civic engagement.

2.6 Social Capital in a Public Policy Perspective: Shaping the Space for Practical Application

Social capital as an interdisciplinary social science construct has recently gained wider public interest, particularly among policy-makers. The growing use of the concept as a public policy tool was primarily initiated by Putnam's study on Italian governance performance, situating social capital as a core cause of the better functioning of local and regional governance (1993a). Relying on Putnam's call for a renewal of policy approaches that include social capital as a conceptual driver and the role of the state in that process, policy-makers have readily accepted the claimed utility of the concept of social capital for enhancing the role of the community in processes of solving particular social malaises (Bryson and Mowbray, 2005).

Yet, Putnam himself often has a fluctuating stance towards the positive role of the state and government policies in the processes of social capital creation and distribution. The recurring theme across the spectrum of his works is that social capital is best generated through horizontal networks of active civic participation in civil society (Putnam, 1993a, 1993b, 1996; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003), which

nurtures the idea of government's non-interventionist approach in the formation of social capital in the community (Putnam, 2000). Still, in his ground-breaking study, *Bowling Alone*, as was noted earlier in this chapter, he briefly addresses the role of government and politics in sustaining, harnessing and increasing stocks of social capital in America, indicating that government and policy-makers should support social capital generation but in a heedful manner (2000: 413). This sentiment obviously expresses a degree of suspicion towards the potential of government policy to positively affect stocks of social capital. In line with his conceptual approach, however, Putnam has suggested that national government institutions should delegate authority to local governments in order to affect the levels of social capital in the community, while coordination mechanisms should be fostered between national and local government and their roles should be seen as complementary (ibid.).

Although Putnam was criticised for his incomplete investigation of the relationship between social capital, policy and the state, failing to provide insight into the role of public authorities in the creation and/or destruction of social capital (Maloney et al., 2000), he was undoubtedly credited for influencing policy-making circles globally to experiment with the use of the concept of social capital in their attempts to nurture social policies designed to achieve a vast array of positive social outcomes.

Further attempts in shaping up the space for the application of the social capital concept in the field of public policy have been provided by Michael Woolcock and his colleagues from the World Bank (Woolcock 1998, 2001; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). As has been already discussed, in working towards a policy agenda for social capital, Woolcock's merit in further developing the concept is related to accentuating the importance of linking social capital, which provides possibilities for building vertical relationships outside the circle of the community, extending them to government institutions at both local and national levels. This indicates that, in sustaining social capital at different levels, it is vital to adopt measures that will create the right conditions for the generation of coherence, connections and the complementarity of actions between states and societies (Woolcock, 1998). These conditions should be dependent on a concrete social and developmental context and policy driven by mutual action of the state and society. According to Woolcock, social capital 'provides a credible point of entry for socio-political issues into a comprehensive multi- and interdisciplinary approach to some of the most pressing issues of our time' (1998: 188).

While some scholars expressed strong enthusiasm vis-à-vis the practical policy application of social capital through policy-making processes (e.g. Maloney et al., 2000; Munn, 2000; Paterson, 2000; Schuller, 2007; Wann, 1995; Woolcock, 1998, 2001; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000), others made sceptical observations (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Fine, 2000; Fukuyama, 2001) ranging from those that pointed to the irrelevancy of the concept's application in social policy discourse (Fine, 2000) to observations that have underlined the negative impact that the state can have on the generation of social capital because some activities are best left to civil society alone (Fukuyama, 2000, 2001). Yet, in light of both scepticism and support of the application of the social capital concept in public policy discourse, it is difficult to deny that there are rationales for the policy application of the concept and multi-level interrelatedness between the state and (civil) society actors in generating social capital in vertical channels of cooperation, while distributing it at the community and wider society levels. The sticking point here is that social capital policies at different levels of application should work in a supportive manner to already existing processes of social capital generation, and that the state may facilitate and provoke these processes by taking into consideration a particular developmental context (Field, 2008).

2.6.1 The Use of Social Capital in Public Policy

If social capital is considered from the perspective of collective or public good, it consequently represents both a goal and a tool of public policy (Field, 2008: 139). Social capital as a public policy *goal* may employ strategies within policies that directly influence levels of social capital through direct measures related to efforts to enlarge the stocks of social capital and the 'well-being of the wider community' (ibid.). Social capital as a *tool* in the public policy discourse may, however, be used to instruct policy objectives through internal and external coordination and cooperation mechanisms of all relevant parties in the policy process including indirect impact on social capital levels through various social development policy measures. Namely, public policy as a direct (and indirect) measure to increase stocks of social capital concerns government strategies that encourage active civic participation, civil society development and support for social cohesion including social policies that strive to affect development of positive social ends (Field, 2008).

While there are a number of levers that public policy may incorporate in promoting social capital, sport policies have become one of the dominant foci of governments in

their efforts to positively affect stocks of community-level social capital (Coalter, 2007; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; Spaaij, 2011). In recent years, cross-cutting public policy development discourse has provided sport with the opportunity to complement overarching public policy agendas, most notably in developed countries, with its ability to foster processes of social cohesion, social inclusion and integration. Accordingly, as suggested by Hoye and Nicholson (2008), inclusion of the social capital concept into sport policy reflects the acceptance by policy makers that social capital is relevant to sport. In general, current sport policy discourse in the majority of developed countries has made a shift in sport agendas from the traditional welfare approach of developing sport in the community to developing communities through sport (Coalter, 2007). These policies often suggest that sport organisations and clubs have a great deal of potential to create bonding as well as bridging social capital, which apart from developing greater cohesion within the club or organisation extends to cooperation within the broader community, affecting its positive development. In addition, social capital has been widely used in development policies that address issues of poverty reduction, conflict resolution, education, health, civil society development and other areas of developmental concern (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Field, 2008; Landolt, 2000; Nicholson and Hoye, 2008; OECD, 2001; Portes and Schuller, 2007; Spaaij, 2011; Woolcock, 1998; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

On the other hand, policy implications may have limits and in some instances negative consequences for social capital. Field suggests that some features of social capital have limited policy application (2008: 154). In the domain of directly fostering informal social ties, policy has little effect. As Field further implies, government can bring people together through policy implementation, and make sure that the 'conditions exist for instrumental cooperation […] but they can't force people to like each other […] and then go the extra mile in terms of trust and regard' (ibid.). Likewise, problems with social capital policies in a developing context that influences the fostering of existing social ties within the community in question may be associated with the dark side of social capital, the side that yields opportunities for the development of clientelism, cronyism and corrupt practices (Field, 2008: 153). Finally, as Fukuyama asserts, 'states can have a serious negative impact on social capital when they start to undertake activities that are better left to the private sector or civil society' (2000: 15).

In line with the view of this thesis, the operationalisation of public policies requires coordinated action by multiple actors, which invokes the issue of partnership

development amongst policy stakeholders and, thus, workable networks of relations that presuppose the circulation of stocks of social capital as a tool indispensible for policy operationalisation. This is not to say that government and public institutions are solely responsible for policy operationalisation, but that national and local governments, civil society, international organisations and the public at large all share common responsibility for adequate policy agenda operationalisation in a multiple-layered synergy of action (Field, 2008; Lewis, 2010; Schuller et al., 2000). Partnership development in the coordination of policy-making and policy implementation is beneficial in at least two instances—it develops multiple arrangements of governance coordination (Lewis, 2010: 131) affecting the development of forms of social capital within the realm of governance actors and, second, it enhances the positive outcomes of joint actions towards achieving particular policy objectives—in this case, social capital as a direct or indirect policy outcome. Finally, as Woolcock and Narayan claim, 'the use of participatory process [in public policy discourse] can facilitate consensus-building and social interaction among stakeholders with diverse interests and resources' (2000: 242).

Creation and Implementation Levels of Social Capital Policies

In spite of divided stances in academic debate on social capital concept application in public policy discourse, policy-makers have embraced the concept in their efforts to influence social betterment at various levels. Thus, states and international policy-making bodies have gradually started to operationalise the concept in different policy aspects. At the international level, the World Bank took the lead, mainly in the context of global poverty reduction programmes (Field, 2008; Schuller, 2007; Woolcock, 2001), but was followed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Field, 2008; Schuller, 2007), United Nations agencies concerned with various aspects of fostering the development of civil society, and also the European Union and Council of Europe, which have developed a series of social exclusion and social cohesion policies built upon the social capital framework (CoE, 2001, 2010; EC, 2010). The initial trend in social capital policy prescription, invoked by the above mentioned international organisations and academics, came to provide national governments with a solid base for the incorporation of the concept of social capital into vast areas of social, educational, health, sport, positive youth development and economic policies, with the aim of achieving positive social outcomes. The governments of Australia, Canada and the European Union Member States have become dominant in the development of

social capital public policy discourse. In recent decades, the European Union has been taking an increased interest in the social capital concept as an essential tool for its social cohesion policy (European Policy Brief, 2009). The main aim of the EU's policy, in the context of social capital, has been directed towards the empowerment of civil society in endeavours to overcome socio-economic divides within and between the Member States (Groeneveld et al., 2006). Furthermore, a Council of Europe Resolution (2003/C 175/02) points to the role of social capital in the promotion of economic development and social cohesion (ibid.). Thus, recognition of the positive potential of the social capital concept within the policy discourse was stimulated by a multitude of policy initiatives by a number of national and international institutions.

Yet, one of the central concerns of national governments and international policy-making bodies in terms of social capital policy creation, is linked to the crafting of evidence-based policies and the investment of resources in the measurement of social capital, in sustaining policy directions (Bryson and Mowbray, 2005). Yet, in attempts to implement evidence-based social capital policy informed by empirical research, policy-makers faced a grand challenge because measurement of elements of social capital performance needed to be context specific, which further hindered the establishment of a general evidence-based platform. On the other hand, Putnam's major work, *Bowling Alone* (2000), has informed policy-makers on evidence parameters for social capital and has, to some extent, become a compendium on how to create policies informed by evidence (Bryson and Mowbray, 2005). However as argued by Field, 'one resulting difficulty is the sheer range of potential indicators, all of which point to different dimensions' (2008: 144). Still, following the trend of evidence-based policy principles, a number of governments have launched social capital national data-gathering initiatives (Field, 2008) intended to empirically inform policy-making discourse while international policy-making bodies and the EU have, meanwhile, invested in a number of research projects intended to ameliorate policy evidence platforms for social capital.

Opportunities and obstacles for effective social capital policies are, as demonstrated, numerous. In searching for positive social development outcomes, governments through their policies should strive to evoke their role as an enabler and facilitator of social capital processes through various multilevel partnerships, providing resources to respective stakeholders to bridge the gap of inability to create positive social ends alone. In doing so, governments need to avoid the risks of undermining existing sources of social capital and of negatively affecting social capital within society (Field, 2008).

Finally, although the concept of social capital, considered either a general policy aim or a policy tool, has been accepted in a part of the literature as having a strong basis for policy application, the debate developed around these issues further suggests that additional efforts are needed in order to assess the nexus between policy and relevant policy outcomes positive for social capital creation and maintenance.

2.7 Social Capital as a Context-dependent Phenomenon

The concept of social capital is often considered to be universally applicable despite its origins rooted in traditions of the developed countries of the West (Pichler and Wallace, 2007). The forms and indicators of social capital, as discussed earlier in this chapter, are usually taken as the model's constant, whereas levels, patterns and manifestations of the forms and indicators are seen as dependent on a particular social setting. Hence, one of the last main characteristics of the concept refers to its context-dependency (e.g. Adam and Rončević, 2003; Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Foley and Edwards, 1999; Gress, 2004; Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003; Miladinović, 2012; Putnam, 1993a, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Rohe, 2004; Schuller, 2007; Schuller et al., 2000; Van Deth, 2003; Woolcock, 1998, 2001, 2004; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000;).

Context-dependency suggests that different forms of social capital have diverse manifestations in different societies and change over time, while different societies will seek to develop different types and blends of dimensions of social capital relevant for their particular social, economic, political, cultural and historical context (Gress, 2004; Rohe, 2004; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

Yet, as explained by Foley and Edwards, the context-dependency traits of social capital pose methodological and conceptual challenges in attempts to investigate the forms of macro-social, political and economic ends of interest to social scientists (1999: 146). Without entering deeper into discussion about these challenges, there is a trend of scarcity of social capital studies carried out in societies whose social, political, economic and cultural contexts differ from those of the developed societies of Western Europe, Canada, Australia and the United States, except for those carried out by the World Bank experts in developing countries. As a consequence, social capital investigation in the semi-periphery, the countries of Southeast Europe and the Balkans have received only modest scholarly attention (Adam and Rončević, 2003).

In a comparative manner, while volumes of existing literature suggest that in general, developed societies will feature a greater level of bridging social capital, hence greater levels of social and particularised trust, an active and vibrant civil society, well-developed cooperation mechanisms between government and civil society, including linking social capital reflected in effective social capital policy initiatives and implementation practices, the countries of Southeast, East and Central Europe, for instance, will rely on stocks of mainly informal, bonding social capital, low levels of trust in general, underdeveloped civil society, including exercise of different informal cooperation practices (e.g. Adam and Rončević, 2003; Field, 2008; Foley and Edwards, 1999; Ganev et al., 2004; Hall, 2002; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2005; Pichler and Wallace, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Rothstein, 2002; Sotiropoulos, 2005). Hence, Western-centred social constructs cannot be transferred universally because social concepts are subject to change when tested in social contexts different to those from which the theory emerged. This research, therefore, attempts to modestly contribute to the relevance of context in social capital research and its implication to theory through discussion of the nexus between sport and social capital in the context of Serbian society. But it is indispensible first to contextualise social capital in the Serbian social setting.

2.7.1 The Serbian Context: A Brief Overview

In providing the baseline for the context and the nature of social capital in Serbia, it is worth succinctly addressing the state of events in the past two decades relevant for the society's (de)development. Namely, in Serbia, a country on the Balkan Peninsula with 7,223,887 inhabitants in 2012 (Countryeconomy, 2014), the period of isolation and political turmoil has adversely affected the adequate functioning of 'transition' processes from communist and socialist regimes to a liberal market economy and democracy. The last decade of the twentieth century was marked with tremendous hardships for the society reflected in involvement in the wars of succession (in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo), the misguidance of economic transformation that resulted in hyperinflation (with its peak in 1993 and the beginning of 1994) and gradual deprivation of the population, international sanctions that underpinned social regression and slowed reform processes, while adequate functioning of the basic state institutions was crippled by the misleading practices of political elites (Cvejić, 2004; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Gordi, 2001; Gordy, 2003, 2005, 2013; Lošonc, 2003). As a consequence of collective isolation and wide-scale economic instability, the character of social relations changed, passivity towards civic engagement increased and was then

reflected in the further isolation and resignation of people in Serbia (Gordi, 2001: 178). The same period was characterised by the rise of nationalistic populism in Serbia that fostered significant social divides (Gordi, 2001; Gordy, 2013) that, amongst others, prevented the development of horizontal ties within the society, negatively affecting the issue of ethnic pluralism while developing 'nationalistic values as dominant collective identity framework' (Cvejić, 2004: 274). The rise in nationalistic populism in Serbia during the nineties, as argued by Gordy in his book, *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives* (Kultura vlasti u Srbiji: Nacionalizam i razaranje alternativa) (Gordi, 2001) is closely connected with the type of regime in power referred to by the author as *nationalist authoritarianism*. Namely, according to Gordy, the main traits of nationalist authoritarianism in Serbia were blends of the old, communist regime or its continuation through relying on old structures of power and development of the regime's 'new' nationalistic identity as a ticket to future survival on the political scene (2001). In fact, the key to the rise and fall of the nationalistic authoritarianism of Slobodan Milošević was according to Gordy, the destruction of or access to alternatives—most notably those progressive, open, urban cultural alternatives as opposed to degrading, mostly rural, closed cultures that induced soaring nationalist sensibilities and values (ibid.). Still, alternatives could not be held behind bars indefinitely. During the second half of the nineties, civic movements began to (re)emerge at the social and political scene in Serbia (Cvejić, 2004: 274). As opposed to the dominant nationalistic movement, civic movements were created with the aim of introducing a system of civic values, rights and freedoms and the constitution of civil society within Serbian society (ibid.). This included support for the preservation of anti-nationalistic, open, democratic, cultural values and engagement in initiatives seeking to overthrow the regime in power.

Following the overthrow of the Milošević regime on October 5th 2000, led by a coalition of opposition parties, including key representatives of the nineties civic movements, (it seemed that) a new 'reformist' period for Serbia began. The government embarked upon an ambitious reformist programme based on models implemented in other Central and Eastern European countries. Initial reformist enthusiasm was, however, darkened by the veil of eroded institutions, a considerable informal economy within the national economy, high poverty rates, a large percentage of deprived population (mainly refugees and internally displaced persons), weak rule of law mechanisms, widespread political and white-collar corruption and organised crime, as

well as a lack of consensus among political elites on the direction of future reforms and division within political elites on the ways in which 'transition' should be pursued (Gordy, 2013). At the same time, the predominant social climate in Serbia was reluctant to recognise the extent of the institutional, social and political degradation since the early nineties and to get to grips with the injustices of the recent past (Kovač, 2007). Therefore, a number of setbacks in the reform processes resulted in a slow transition, laden with unresolved issues from the past. Besides, the initial reformist path that began in October 2000 was seriously undermined by the assassination of the Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjić on 12th March 2003, causing substantial political and social regression (Nikolić, 2008). As Gordy points out, institutions first failed, then emerged or perhaps re-emerged and changed (most evidently in formal terms) while 'things that once appeared to be clear became confused' (2013: 45).

Coping with past legacies and present challenges of transformation, Serbian society still faces a number of social malaises reproduced in the prolonged and fluctuating reforms and transition (Lazić and Cvejić, 2010; Tomanović, 2008). A commonly used term to describe Serbian contemporary social, political, economic (but equally cultural) contexts is 'transition' or the 'transitional context'. But what is meant by the term 'transition' is not particularly clear. In fact, as Gordy suggests, the term 'transition' may be misleading in referring to the contextual traits of a country because it implies that the state is moving into 'an eschatological dynamic at the end of which some ideal state will be attained' (2005: 18), while in fact what is actually attained is a tense, blurry and disoriented 'reforming' path 'in which the strongest argument in favour of a weak new order is the threat that an old and dangerous one might return' (ibid.). In this respect the transition may be described as a vacuum of disorientations with frequent hesitations on the directions of reforms to be undertaken. This is perhaps because there are many indications that Serbian society is divided over how to approach reform processes and over visions of the future (Gordy, 2004, 2013). While the term 'transition' is often used in this thesis to refer to the Serbian macro context it presumes the above mentioned understanding (including blurriness) of the term, while also incorporating the notion of de-development as, paradoxically, a state of transition or its very form in this country's context. To put it simply, on its path to transform the social, economic and political orders, the costs of transition, often considered as 'necessary', were (and still are) reflected in institutional 'structurelessness', 'informalisation' of the economy, social instability and social de-cohesion (Blagojević, 2009b)—all to some extent describing

the processes of de-development. From another angle of retrospection, however, 'de-developmental' or 'transitional' social processes in the Serbian context reflect the country's 'semi-peripheral' macro developmental position (the positional characteristic of the majority of Central and Eastern European countries), which should not be overlooked when discussing the 'transitional context'.

In general terms, semi-periphery, the concept that evolves from world system theory, is a social hybrid that comprises the traits (in relation to power positions and resource possession) of both the centre (developed countries or regions) and the periphery (underdeveloped countries or regions) (Blagojević, 2009b; Van Rossem, 1996). According to Blagojević, the semi-periphery, which is in essence transitional and often in a state of 'permanent reform', in attempting to follow the models from the centre, is shaped by contrasting developmental and de-developmental efforts—to integrate into the core via the 'modernisation' of social, political and economic structures and to resist this integration by being drawn closer to the periphery (2009b). This creates a permanent condition of instability because the traits of the social change at the semi-periphery are either too fast or too ambivalent or both at the same time to enable the creation of multi-level structural stability (ibid.). Thus, another viewing aspect of the semi-periphery, as a highly dynamic entity, is that it should be constantly 'improved' and 'modernised' on its way to resemble the core. In that regard, European Union integration processes represent one of the major aspects of the transit of Serbian and other semi-peripheral societies in the region of Southeast Europe, into more stable, more modern, functional societies. Their prospects for becoming 'core' societies are, however, limited as transitional challenges often yield a formal system and institutional 'adjustments', while societal-level changes remain in the vicious circle of de-developmental conditions (Blagojević, 2009b).

In aspiring to transform and modernise its society, Serbia, a 'member' of the European semi-periphery, strives to harmonise social, economic and political systems toward the model of the centre—the European Union—affecting social transformation in line with the requirements of accession. This resulted in acceptance of Serbia's EU candidacy in March 2012 (EC, 2014a) followed by the decision of the European Council to start the accession negotiation process in June 2013 (Republic of Serbia Government, 2014) based on a spectrum of formally implemented reforms in the areas of 'constitutional, legislative and institutional framework [reforms] which overall corresponds to European and international standards' (EC, 2011a). On the other hand, as indicated by the

European Commission, the pace of reforms needs to be further underpinned with the efforts to reconstruct the economic sector and advance dialogue over the status of Kosovo (ibid.).

However, in parallel with the overarching formal transformation of institutional and policy frameworks on the route to EU membership, reforms in Serbia are continuously hampered by issues of form versus content, referring to a lack of implementation mechanisms for formally adopted policies and including a gap between reform aims and achieved results (Džunić, 2008). As argued by Blagojević, this reflects formalised and formal adjustments to the centre accompanied with de-development at the societal level (2009b). Thus, as was recently discussed at the *Us and Them – Symbolic Divisions in Society in Serbia* conference held in Belgrade in 2012 (Centar za empirijske studije kulture jugoistočne Evrope and Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2012) that gap opens up space for irregularities, and regressional trends in society, reflected by widespread corruption (notably political), an underdeveloped market economy, trends of increasing unemployment and heightened rates of poverty, including regional development disparities, which maintains the pace of de-development in Serbia, stemming from the country's semi-peripheral position.

Ultimately, according to Rončević (2002) the key distinction between the core and the semi-periphery is in the levels and types of social capital that impact social cohesion, multi-level cooperation, and good governance, which if the semi-periphery is to come closer to the European core should be increased and its nature transformed. While this assumption carries some weight, it omits, however, to account for the role of the context, including de-developmental social conditions at the semi-periphery, which creates a particular nature of social capital in a particular social context.

2.7.2 Types and Levels of Social Capital in Serbia

Much of the research relating to social capital in Serbia agrees that the semi-peripheral contextual setting has influenced the domination of informal mainly bonding social capital (Bobić, 2012; Cvejić, 2004; Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin et al., 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Džunić, 2008; Ganev et al., 2004; Gavrilović and Jovanović, 2012; Kogan, 2011; Lošonc, 2003; Miladinović, 2012; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2005; Sotiropoulos, 2005; Stojiljković, 2010; Tomanović, 2002, 2008). In the aforementioned context, characterised by a degree of failure to implement formal rules,

eroded formal institutions and decreased security, informal social networks dominated the social capital model in Serbia. They largely compensate for various formal organisational and institutional failures (Lošonc, 2003). Likewise, networks of immediate support such as family, friends and neighbours represented the source of social capital at the individual but also the local and collective level (Bobić, 2012; Stojiljković, 2010; Tomanović, 2008, 2012). These networks were additionally supplemented by the emergence of new kinship support at the edge of legality, established by networks of shared suffering or illegitimate action (Lošonc, 2003). In times of gradual economic, social, political and cultural deprivation, social capital was the main source of individual and local-collective advancement. Therefore, in societies featuring turbulent transition processes, the space for social capital lies in close-knit communities characterised by particularised forms of trust, and thus sequenced endeavours of support. Existing research on social capital in Serbia reports that there are low levels of bridging and linking social capital, that bonding social capital embedded in networks of close-knit communities prevails and that the case for initiating horizontal and vertical connectedness within Serbian society needs to be encouraged.

A somewhat extended typology of social capital specific to Serbia has been provided by sociologist Predrag Cvetičanin and his colleagues (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Cvetičanin et al., 2012). Namely, this group of scholars advocates that in Serbia two main forms of social capital co-exist—*the social capital of solidarity* and *political social capital*. Political social capital, according to these authors, refers to social networks that connect social actors 'whose control over access to public resources […] enables them to use these resources to satisfy the private needs of other members of these social networks and in this way accumulate the power' (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011: 447). In the same vein, they assert that the total of the above networks represents 'the parallel, informal structure of power in Serbian society' (ibid.). The system of exchange of favours and norms of reciprocity dominate these social networks in accessing levels of power and may equally involve complete strangers in the practice of exchanging favours.

Contrarily, the social capital of solidarity is firmly grounded in primary ties—social networks among family, friends and neighbours based on developed emotional connectedness (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011). Therefore, both of the types of social capital defined by Cvetičanin and his colleagues, refer to informal social networks and strong bonding relational practices that lack the potential for imbuing wider socially

cohesive processes at the societal level or retain the capacity to exacerbate social divisions.

Furthermore, according to reported evidence, levels of social capital are considerably low in Serbia (Ganev et al., 2004; Milivojević, 2006; Sotiropoulos, 2005; Tomanović, 2008). Yet, while this fact stands for formal or bridging and linking types of social capital, it does not prove to be fully relevant in the case of bonding social capital. Namely, according to Lošonc's findings, contemporary Serbian society is overwhelmed with stocks of informal social capital (2003), indicating that social capital is a considerable tool for achieving certain individual or collective ends, but that it does not positively affect cohesive processes at the community level.

In addition, as Putnam pointed out in *Bowling Alone* when discussing the impact of the legacies of war on social capital in the United States, 'it is a commonplace of sociology that external conflict increases internal cohesion' (2000: 267). Therefore, in Serbia, bonding or informal social capital was further strengthened, increased and segregated during the civil wars of the recent past (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011), being led by two main orientations, one nationalistic, dominant in the period of the socialist regime and the other, civic, which developed in opposition to nationalistic structures as argued earlier. However, stocks of positive social capital embedded in civic participation in social movements during the nineties, suddenly plummeted after the fall of the Milošević regime (Cvejić, 2004), affecting the trend of transformation of civic participation and civil society in Serbia.

2.7.3 Trust

In his seminal works, addressed in previous discussion in this study, Putnam argued that for achieving greater levels of social capital beneficial for the community as a whole, in addition to reciprocity, developed social or generalised trust is an indispensable ingredient (2000). The Serbian social map invokes generally low levels of all forms of trust relevant to social capital creation and maintenance (Beogradski Centar za ljudska prava, 2012; CeSID, 2012; Bobić, 2012; Ganev et al., 2004; Gordy, 2004, 2013; Jovanović and Gavrilović, 2012; Kołczyńska, 2012; Sotiropoulos, 2005; Stojiljković, 2010; Stojiljković and Mihailović, 2010; Tomanović, 2008; UNDP, 2011), while indicators on the norms of reciprocity in this context have been largely omitted in

discussion of social capital in the existing literature or have been equated with indicators of trust (see Jovanović and Gavrilović, 2012).

Within the existing levels of trust the dominant form is particularised trust as a basis for social interaction. Moreover, social or generalised trust is rather underdeveloped among the population of Serbia, while political trust remains the least developed, suggesting low levels of political and civic participation by the citizens of Serbia (Ganev et al., 2004; Jovanović and Gavrilović, 2012; Sotiropoulos, 2005; Stojiljković, 2010). Some of the recent studies on social dialogue in Serbia (Stojiljković and Mihailović, 2010), the state of human rights in Serbia (Beogradski centar za ljudska prava, 2012), and public opinion surveys (CeSID, 2012), showed that the level of political trust and trust in formal institutions and associations (e.g. trade unions) was historically low during 2010 and 2011. For instance, CeSID reported that the population of Serbia had the least trust in political parties (9 percent), the parliament (16 percent), institutions of the rule of law (18 percent) and the government (20 percent), while the church, the police and the army represent institutions with the highest degrees of trust among the sampled population — 59 percent, 45 percent and 44 percent respectively (CeSID, 2012). The lack of trust in public institutions, as reported in the literature, reflects the highly entrenched corruptive practices that work in the interests of particular groups and against the wider social interest. Moreover, trust in formal associations such as trade unions, which have a long tradition in Serbia, and civil society organisations in general was similarly low—15 percent trust in trade unions (Stojiljković and Mihailović, 2010: 35) and 18 percent in civil society organisations (CeSID, 2012). Finally, a range of empirical findings have provided almost identical results with regards to the levels of particularised and social or generalised trust of the Serbian population (e.g. Ganev et al. 2004; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2005). According to these researches the degree of particularised trust in Serbia is around 48 percent (Ganev et al., 2004: 19), while social trust levels are at 33 percent (ibid.). It is obvious from the typology model of social capital discussed above that trust as an indicator of the concept is in line with the type of social capital generally created and maintained in Serbia. Informal, bonding types of social capital in Serbia directly implies the particularity of trust in the webs of social relations.

2.7.4 Civic Participation in Serbia

Active civic participation in formal associations is, as argued by Putnam, one of the central indices of civic engagement and subsequently the creation and distribution of social capital across society (2000). Participation in and engagement with civil society activities 'bring[s] citizens into close contact with one another, and are clearly essential to the accumulation of social capital' (Cox, 2002: 338).

Again, drawing on the specific Serbian context, the state of civic participation as one of the social capital indicators logically follows the type of social capital and trust prevailing in the contemporary social capital model present in Serbia.

Namely, some quantitative evidence suggests that active civic participation in formal (and informal) civil and political organisations in Serbia is considerably low (CeSID, 2012; Cvejić, 2004; Ganev et al., 2004; Gavrilović and Jovanović, 2012; Sotiropoulos, 2005; Stojiljković, 2010). For instance, evidence from Gavrilović's and Jovanović's study indicates that 77 percent of research participants do not belong to any formal or informal group or association (2012: 151), while active citizens' political engagement shows a moderate trend. According to recent CeSID research, only 2 percent of surveyed respondents aged 18-35, were actively involved in the activities of a political party (2012), while according to Ganev and his colleagues, 14 percent of respondents were members of formal non-political associations, 11 percent of informal organisations and 8 percent were members of political parties in 2002 and 2003 (2004: 22). In addition, and of particular interest for this study, participation in sport organisations proved to be among the highest in the spectrum of general civic participation, reaching 19 percent among the general population in the period from 2004 to 2006 (Milivojević, 2006: 49). Finally, a somewhat higher level of participation was characteristic for participation in collective civic actions, which was notably extensive during the nineties (Cvejić, 2004; Ganev et al., 2004). However, participation in social movements at the time did not invoke the development of a stable civil society (Cvejić, 2004) perhaps because, as Eva Cox argues, '[s]hort-term events and social movements may offer different experiences of collective action but fewer opportunities for on-going learning of transferable social skills' (2002: 338). Hence, general levels of active civic participation in Serbia seem to be narrow, implying infertile ground for stocks of bridging social capital to be generated.

Active civic participation, as discussed in the previous sections, is operationalised through the public space of people's interaction, institutionalised in the civil society sector, which features multiple characteristics in relation to a particular social context. In Serbia, the civil society sector, including the NGO movement, which emerged during the Milošević regime on the back of efforts aiming to create alternative spaces and conditions for democratic development (Gordy, 2002), is popularly regarded as a rather 'complex and vague arena' (Milivojević, 2006: 44) characterised by a lack of broader active participation and positive public perception as well as an underdeveloped infrastructure, often including a lack of human and sustainable economic resources (Gordy, 2002; Gradjanske inicijative and Kancelarija za saradnju sa civilnim društvom Vlade Republike Srbije, 2011; Milivojević, 2006). The unstable nature of the sector is further reflected in the flux of social, political and cultural needs to be addressed as well as 'donor-driven' agendas that often fall short in recognising needs in context (Gordy, 2002). This is compounded by the competitive endeavours of some civil society actors in aiming to win a greater share of donor assistance.

The development of communication and cooperation mechanisms within the civil society sector, although displaying increasing trends is still, according to Milivojević, limited to organisations engaged in the same or similar spheres of activity (2006). Moreover, cooperation among civil society organisations for pursuing common interests in networks of organisations is moderate in Serbia (Gordy, 2005; 2013; Gradjanske inicijative and Kancelarija za saradnju sa civilnim društvom Vlade Republike Srbije, 2011; Milivojević, 2006). Namely, as reported by Gradjanske inicijative and Kancelarija za saradnju sa civilnim društvom Vlade Republike Srbije (the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society of the Serbian Government), only 23 percent of civil society organisations sampled in 2011 were involved in some kind of cooperation with civil society networks (2011: 53). Besides, the majority of civil society organisations sampled in the above research (64 percent) claim that the influence of the civil sector on public policy in Serbia is low, while 33 percent of the organisations, including sport associations, consider that this impact is satisfactory (Gradjanske inicijative and Kancelarija za saradnju sa civilnim društvom Vlade Republike Srbije, 2011: 41).

Finally, although 39 percent of civil society organisations believe that the state is indifferent towards the establishment of mechanisms of cooperation with the civil society sector, the relationship between the state and civil society is continuously evolving (Gradjanske inicijative and Kancelarija za saradnju sa civilnim društvom

Vlade Republike Srbije, 2011: 62). In January 2011, the Serbian government established the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society (Kancelarija za saradnju sa civilnim društvom, 2012), whose mission is to develop cooperation mechanisms linking civil society organisations and the government with the aim of achieving a set of public interests. In endeavouring to expand the existing debate on the nature of active civic participation, multi-level cooperation mechanisms between sport associations, the relevant civil society sectors and state institutions will be addressed by the current study through examination of the nexus between the nature of social capital and active civic participation in the domain of the researched sport structures in Serbia.

To sum up, the available evidence provided by the existing body of research demonstrates that the social space in Serbia is saturated with stocks of bonding social capital characterised by particularised trust manifested in close-knit communities, whereas the majority of the population is rather passive with regards to formal associational activities and initiatives which, inspected from a Putnamian social capital perspective, suggests rather low levels of social capital in this country. Likewise, the activities of civil society organisations, including sport associations, are continuously hampered by structural and contextual impediments preventing the generation of stocks of bridging and linking social capital in Serbian society.

2.8 Summary

This chapter has offered the basis for the study's conceptual framework by unpacking the main theoretical strains of social capital and by adopting particular conceptual determinants to guide empirical investigation and analysis in this study.

The contributions of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam to the development of contemporary social capital thought, is considered ground-breaking. Their theoretical conceptualisations, although originating from different social traditions, intersect in a common denominator—that of social networks as a structurally central element for social capital creation and maintenance.

In the case of Bourdieu, the concept of social capital is derived from his focus on individual level possession of economic and cultural capital and their potential to transform into social capital via established networks of social relations, while considering it as an asset of privileged individuals. On the other hand, for Coleman, social capital represents a resource for both disadvantaged and elite social groups, but

similarly to Bourdieu, he regards social capital as an asset of individuals and/or relatively small and dense groups (Field, 2008). Yet, unlike Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam are also concerned with norms and obligations as cultural elements of the concept of social capital in their treatment of it as 'private' and 'public' good.

In evolving fashion, Robert Putnam has ambitiously stretched the concept via social capital interrogation relating to associational activities in the communities and nations as units of analysis, considering it both an individual and collective developmental resource, recognising its multi-dimensionality and context-based dependency, implying that the universality of the concept can be traced in its three main constituents: networks of relationships, norms of reciprocity and trust.

Although predominantly relying on Putnam's social capital model, the synthesis of approaches is considered as best to tailor the thesis' conceptual determinants. This has been done via inclusion of both structural (networks) and cultural (trust and norms of reciprocity) components of social capital, including their various typologies, while establishing a link between social capital and related socially cohesive processes as incubators of positive social developments. Thus, the creation and distribution of social capital across the veins of a society, as Putnam suggests (2000), depends on specific types of trust, networks and norms that create corresponding types of social capital inducing multi-dimensional social outcomes reflected in varying degrees of social cohesiveness.

Moreover, recent developments in the debate on social capital have extended its boundaries to the realm of the concept's practical application in public policy discourse, providing further impetus for designing this study's conceptual framework. In setting the ground for a social capital policy agenda, Michael Woolcock accentuated the importance of vertical social connectedness, an extension of the social capital typology, which involves the state as an actor in social capital creation and the establishment of conditions for coherence, connections and the complementarity of actions across different social strata (1998).

Lastly, in a social capital and in this study's perspective, the traits of a wider social context have been recognised as momentous in shaping the manifestations of social capital at multiple social levels. Based on the discussion of social capital models and levels in the Serbian context, it has been shown that a wider social context sets the

conditions for the development of a particular form of social capital characterised by particular types of trust and norms, which in turn affects social capital levels accumulated across the spectrum of various forms of civic engagement. In addition, the diagnosis of a social context in the case of 'transitional' Serbian society has also set the ground for furthering discussion on social capital by opening up the space for developing sport social capital models in the empirical chapters of this study. However, it is indispensible first to establish an additional level in shaping the conceptual framework of the study via discussion of the nexus between sport and social capital through review of existing literature while finally contextualising the development space of Serbian sport. The next chapter will address these matters.

CHAPTER 3. Sport and Social Capital: A Nexus for Positive Sport and Social Development?

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to question the conceptual thinking on the relationship between sport and its social impact. The chapter, therefore, scrutinises contemporary sociological and policy discourse on the role of sport in the creation and reproduction of social capital.

The chapter, apart from the introduction, is divided into five sections. The first section discusses the conceptual approach to the notion of sport. It provides traditional and alternative sociological approaches to the concept of sport, relying on the relevance of contexts and cultures. The next section turns to an assessment of the multifaceted nexus between sport and social capital, discussing the nature of social capital created or reproduced in and through sport. The third section addresses the social benefits of sport for overlapping communities of stakeholders by critically investigating the interrelations between the concepts of sport volunteerism, social cohesion, social integration and inclusion and the concept of social capital. Following the logic implemented in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the fourth section deals with national and global applications of the concept of social capital in sports policy discourse. It discusses the issues of policy processes, conceptualisations of social capital in national and international sports policy, rationales for social capital application in sports policy discourse and issues of evidence operationalisation for justifying the application of the concept of social capital in sports policy agendas. The final section of this chapter portrays the Serbian sporting context, including its organisational and system funding characteristics, accounting for contextual relevance in social capital studies. Simultaneously, the aim of this final section is to gently shift attention to the general sporting scene in Serbia and thus to assist in a comprehensive understanding of the empirical results to follow.

3.2 Towards a Definition of Sport

Sport is a result of social endeavours and it 'can be best understood from a sociological perspective' (Maguire, 2011b: 858). Therefore, as suggested by Maguire (2011a), situating sport within a particular social theory framework enables the development of

tools of interpretation, understanding limits and prospects, and socially contextual processes in disciplining emerging research worlds. Following that logic defining sport while situating it within the theory of social capital is an indispensable further task to be undertaken.

When seeking to define sport, static and a precise definition in the dynamic social worlds is difficult to conceptualise. On the other hand, precision in defining sport assists in increasing analytical clarity (Coakley and Pike, 2009: 6; Spaaij, 2011: 18). It is, hence, useful to account for a concrete definition, while allowing for alternative approaches to defining sports.

According to Spaaij, 'sports can be defined as institutionalized, competitive and ludic physical activity' (2011: 17). In a similar manner, Coakley and Pike agree that most scholars in the field contend that: 'Sports are institutionalized competitive activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by participants motivated by internal and external rewards' (2009: 5).

Both of the above definitions of sport stress the *institutionalised* and *competitive* character of *physical activity* as cornerstones of sport.

Why, however, is one physical activity considered a sport, while another is not? It is not clear how intensely, and in which form, one needs to be physically active to be qualified as doing sports, thus the level and intensity of physical activity do not fall under specifically objective rules that can determine what the notion of sport applies to. Secondly, sports are institutionalised activities that are standardised, structured by rules and codes of conduct, and governed by a particular sport organisation or institution within particular temporal and spatial frameworks (Coakley and Pike, 2009; Giulianotti, 2005; Spaaij; 2011). The rules, standards, structures and governance applied in sport may be portrayed in many different forms, including team structure and its features, playing field characteristics, equipment, use of technology and time limits (Coakley and Pike, 2009; Spaaij, 2011). Furthermore, physical activity may be recreational thus not competitive, whereas sports are featured with competitiveness. Competition is reflected in rivalry, victory and defeat (Giulianotti, 2005: xii), in conflict and challenge within an institutionalised setting. The third aspect of sport, as indicated in the above definitions, is its ludic character that includes the internal and external rewards individuals get by doing sports (Coakley and Pike, 2009; Spaaij, 2011). Essentially, sport is about playing

a game motivated by internal and external compensation, understood as a form of personal satisfaction, and the joy of participation, but also as a form of excelling in skill, which is important from both an individual inner perspective and from the perspective of external recognition and approval (Coakley and Pike, 2009: 6). On the other hand, contemporary sport development trends show a decrease in the momentousness of its ludic character, which is compensated for by financial rewards, status and the prospects of social mobility arising from participation in sports. Yet, and of particular interest for this study, the aspects of sport as playing a game motivated by internal joy, participation for mutual joy, social interaction and external recognition are always present no matter the temporal, spatial and developmental context of sport.

In contrast to a precise definition of sport, which has significant analytical advantages, an alternative approach to defining and identifying sport in society uses the principle of interaction with the social and cultural contexts sport is embedded in (Coakley and Pike, 2009: 6-7). This alternative approach to defining sport opens up space for a more comprehensive and multi-angled analysis of sport in society than is possible when using a static, precise model of definition (ibid.). Furthermore, a flexible approach to defining sport takes into account the studying of ideas of people in certain social and cultural contexts on the notion of physical activities. Thus, in conceptualising sport, it is necessary to answer the question why and how some physical activities more than others are defined as sports, taking into consideration the temporal, the spatial and the overall social setting.

There are cultural differences in how people identify with sports and make them a part of their lives (Coakley and Pike, 2009; Spaaij, 2011). This said, it is important to underline that the cultural and social context shape data presented in this thesis, but also assist in typifying sports studied as *established* and *emerging*, reflecting the cultural, economic and social understanding and significance of sports in the specific Serbian setting. Furthermore, the research data problematises a precise definition of sport getting closer to an alternative approach by indicating, for example, the changing nature of playing football at the grassroots level to fit various programmatic aims and local circumstances. For instance, people working in GFP delivery throughout Serbia influenced the modification of the rules of the game within the programme to reduce competitiveness, foster increased participation of various population categories and to physically adapt activities to the particular group of participants.

Finally, as it was indicated earlier in this section, a distinction between *established* and *emerging* sports in the Serbian context is, for the purposes of this research, indispensible to draw. Namely, that distinction can be drawn from the following perspectives: a) the developmental stage from a temporal and results perspective; b) participation rates at all levels of involvement in a given sport; c) financial investment (most notably from national and local sport institutions and sponsors) in the development of certain sports; d) media exposure of sporting results but also other initiatives the sport is involved in, such as assistance of local development through sport; and e) spectatorship rates—the level of popularity in a given context. Yet, in light of the above distinctions, it can be argued that they also draw on four different dimensions of sport represented in a Serbian context, but equally in European and international contexts—these are: 1) sport for all—which is understood as a recreational physical activity one can do for pleasure, health ameliorating purposes and improving individual results in sporting activity (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2011a: 10); 2) amateur sport—which in contrast to 'sport for all' has an organised and competitive dimension, but is not commercially developed (Garcia, 2008: 25); 3) elite-amateur sport—represents an intersection of the features of amateur and elite sport reflected in scarce financial sustainability, which makes difficult to increase development of the sport in question, but also poses drawbacks for athletes to make a living out of it (ibid.); 4) elite sport (the term that is often used interchangeably to point to professional sport) encompasses sports activities resulting in elite sport results and sporting qualities for which athletes are financially rewarded (Garcia, 2008: 25; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2011a: 10). Lastly, a distinction between team and individual sports is worth noting as this thesis looks at multi-layered human and social interactions in *team* sports—grassroots football and rugby league—as a site for the generation of social capital.

The presented typologies are not mutually exclusive and blends of types will reflect upon particular micro, meso and macro social and cultural contexts. The empirical chapters of this thesis will further present discussion of distinctions and connections between the types of researched sports and sport programmes in Serbia.

3.3 The Nature of Social Capital in Sport

Sport is a product of social processes (Maguire, 2011b: 858). As Maguire further states, sport is a form of collective action interconnecting different people in particular networks while creating certain sporting outcomes (2011b: 860). Yet, contemporary sport development and sport policy discourse research is undoubtedly stepping out from the mere investigation of the development of isolated sports worlds being directed towards enquiries about a multi-layered nexus between sport and broader social development. Thus, the central idea of contemporary sport development discourse gradually accounted for in this thesis, is that it may be 'directed toward wider social objectives' (Spaaij, 2011). The academic and policy literature on the social benefits of sport suggests the multidimensional nature of sport social impact reflected in its capacity to contribute to social integration, social cohesion and social inclusion, civic participation, positive youth development, as well as to promote tolerance, peace-building and interethnic dialogue (e.g. Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2007, 2010; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gasser and Levinsen, 2004; Giulianotti, 2011a, 2011b; Harris, 1998; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; Hughson et al., 2005; Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008; Long and Sanderson, 2001; Perks, 2007; Putnam, 2000; SDP IWG, 2008; Spaaij, 2009b, 2011; Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009). In this respect, in recent years the concept of social capital has been accepted by a great majority of scholars in their attempts to meet conceptual challenges in critically assessing sport's social role. Nicholson and Hoye (2008) argue that, although the relationship between sport and social capital has not been exhaustively scrutinised, it presents a fruitful approach to the topics of how sport and sport development practices can generate social benefits through social capital creation in and through sport. This research, hence, attempts to contribute to the on-going debate in general and in relation to the Serbian context in particular.

As discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, social capital theorist, Robert Putnam, was consistent in highlighting the role of sport, and sport associational activities in creating and developing social capital (2000). His work has, hence, chiefly inspired theoretical thinking about the social potential of sport (Nicholson and Hoye, 2008: 24), including this particular research. It is not surprising that Putnam recognised the role of sport as one of the major social capital generators. Namely, the vast majority of sports are of associational character, involving individuals interacting, either as participants, spectators or volunteers, in which communal rewards are present (Perks, 2007).

Simultaneously, as Harris (1998) outlines sport has the potential to foster civic engagement, contributing to increased community cohesiveness, thus crossing racial, ethnic, gender, and class boundaries. Yet, in introducing discussion on the relationship between sport and social capital the dominant mechanisms for creating different types of social capital and its main elements in and through sports deserve attention. Therefore, by engaging with the existing debate within the developed world academe this thesis expounds the link between social capital and sport, but it also strives to fill the gap in current literature by examining the relevance of the particular social capital elements in creating different types of social capital in and through sports.

Building upon the debate on social capital typology relevant for this research (see Chapter 2), the following discussion focuses on the character and levels of *bonding, bridging* and *linking* social capital *in and through sports* and social capital defining elements—social networks, trust and norms of reciprocity.

3.3.1 Bonding Social Capital in Sport

According to Hughson et al., bonding and bridging social capital in sport will simultaneously circulate (2005) with bonding being associated with the multi-layered shared identities reflecting, *inter alia*, belonging to a sport club, organisation or team, connected to the generation of unity and cohesion within a particular group of individuals, while bridging with its horizontal component can contribute to the development of social networks outside a single sport, team, club or organisation associated with the notion of impersonality (ibid.). In a sporting setting, however, much of the evidence suggests that *bonding* social relations are predominant (e.g. Kobayashi et al., 2013; Nichols et al., 2012; Nicholson and Hoye, 2008; Spaaij, 2011; Spaaij and Westerbeek, 2010; Vermueulen and Verweel, 2009; Walseth, 2008). Collective identification through sport—shared norms and values—are closely linked to thick levels of trust that impose creation of bonding social capital in sports in general, but in team sports in particular (Nichols et al., 2012). To put it simply, bonding is about identity work (Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009: 1215). Thus, social interaction characterised by trust and norms of reciprocity within a social network in a given sporting context is built upon the matching multiple identities of those involved in the networks, while the resources to support such identities are context dependent (Nichols et al., 2012). Being involved in sports is a means of creating relational identities that are direct, flexible and may be also ephemeral (Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009: 1214). Ties

between similar people add to the sociability and the pleasure of involvement in sport (ibid.) but also increase peer support, make friendships stronger, and affect social support processes, acting as a tool for 'getting by' (e.g. Spaaij, 2011; Walseth, 2008). Furthermore, there is evidence that bonding social capital created within a sporting context has the ability to assist in increasing social mobility (Kobayashi et al., 2013), which challenges Putnam's understanding of the scarce ability of 'dense ties' to contribute to the augmentation of social mobility (2000). Moreover, Vermeulen and Verweel (2009) advocate that bonding social ties in sport do not create closed and homogenous networks because members of sport organisations, clubs and teams have multiple and flexible identities, which indicates pre-existing resources for identities as the emergent product of interactions in sport. In a similar vein, Coalter argues that bonding social capital shows potential to assist in 'building collective confidence, cohesion and cooperation' (2010: 1383). Critically, however, this assumption confronts what has previously been assumed by social capital theory and policy discourse about the exclusionary potential of bonding social capital in a particular social context. This research attempts to test this argument in broader terms via reflection on the nexus between a particular social context and the inclusionary capabilities of bonding social capital created in and through the researched sports.

Finally, while bonding social capital may play a role in smaller-scale social regeneration of a local character and contribute to rebuilding confidence and local cohesion within a sport entity, many social capital commentators regard *bridging* social capital as being more socially significant (Coalter, 2007: 60).

3.3.2 Bridging Social Capital in Sport

Bridging social capital is seen by a number of social capital commentators as an incubator of social capital at the community level. As stated earlier in this thesis, active engagement in expanding social relations characterised by generalised trust and norms of reciprocity, outside the single sport club or organisation to the larger scope of sporting and non-sporting networks contributes to greater collective and individual social capital, reflected in various positive social ends such as socially cohesive processes. However, in contemporary sport sociology discourse answers to the question, to what extent sport is a site for development of *bridging* social capital, vary. For instance, the corpus of studies demonstrating ample potential for the creation of bridging social capital in sports, suggests that sport serves as a an engine to bolster

generalised trust and norms of reciprocity by creating new individually and collectively owned social relations across various dividing dimensions, such as ethnic, national, racial, gender, religious and class, inducing socially cohesive processes in the wider community (e.g. Coalter, 2010; Harris, 1998; Hoye and Nicholson, 2011; Jarvie, 2003; Misener and Doherty, 2012; Perks, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Seippel, 2006; Welty Peachey et al., 2013; Zakus et al., 2009). These statements reflect Putnam's position on participation in organised sports activities as pertinent to exercising *bridging* relational practices (2000). There is, however, evidence of a widespread decline in participation in organised team sports (in America) indicating the changing nature of sport that impacts the types and levels of social capital—notably bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000). Moreover, Putnam sees organised bowling leagues not only as an arena for *bridging* between various identities' scales in a particular bowling league but also among the leagues, as bowling has an emphasised inclusionary character reflected in the participation of athletes of various classes, ages, educational levels, and ethnic origins. Yet, for Putnam, a decline in organised league bowling and augmentation of recreational individualised bowling is an issue of concern when it comes to decreasing levels of the bridging social capital that sport practice can induce both within the sports and in the broader community (2000: 113). This statement poses the question of whether the changed nature of sports participation, sport development and organisation in certain contexts results in a decrease in bridging social capital or whether sport in general, organised or recreational, institutionalised or not is a site for an increase of bridging social capital.

A related argument is offered by a number of authors who assert that, although bridging social capital in various sports organisations, programmes and clubs is created and further extended to the community, it is more difficult to achieve compared to sports immanent bonding social connections (e.g. Delaney and Keaney, 2005; Krouwel et al., 2006; Nichols et al., 2012; Seippel, 2008; Spaaij, 2009c, 2011; Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009; Walseth, 2008). For example, a study carried out in the Norwegian context by Kristin Walseth on sport's ability to cross multi-ethnic divides and foster integration processes by bridging ethnic cleavages, showed that sport clubs had limited ability to play a role in the creation of bridging social networks across social class and the immigrant and non-immigrant divide (2008). This was most notably due to sport's structural limitations and local sports clubs being situated on either side of immigrant and non-immigrant lines of division (ibid.). In a similar fashion, Krouwel and his

colleagues (2006) demonstrated that sport's ability to foster bridging relations across multi-ethnic lines in the Dutch context is also somewhat limited. Namely, they concluded that although indigenous groups wanted to bridge with Turkish and Moroccan immigrants through sport, youngsters from an immigrant background were inclined to remain within the boundaries of their own sports teams. Moreover, they suggested that inter-ethnic and cultural cleavages brought tensions to interaction through sport (ibid.). It is, however, important to be careful when generalising from the above studies, as the potential to develop bridging social capital will vary widely depending on the nature, size, location and membership in sports organisations, and the communities within which they are based (Coalter, 2007) as well as the wider social, political, economic and cultural context. The position of this thesis towards the creation of bridging social capital in and through sport is somewhat critical, which resonates with the need to comprehensively inspect both positive and negative potentials, the traits of this form of social capital and its nexus with sport, which with the exception of a few studies, current literature in this area of sport sociology often fails to address.

Ultimately, of concern for this study is the potential for the creation of bridging social capital not only from the perspective of participation in sports, but also from the perspective of organisational capacities to network horizontally and vertically with other sport and non-sport organisations and state institutions in charge of sport. Cooperation among sport organisations horizontally, therefore, involves establishing short or long-term partnerships in and around sport (Doherty and Misener, 2008) that potentially induce bridging social capital for the organisations in question. Yet, 'openness', capacity and the interest of sports organisations for the establishment of sustainable partnerships and interconnecting strategies within the wider community are questionable. As Seippel states, sports (voluntary) organisations (in the Norwegian setting) mostly act in an isolated manner having weaker links to other sport and non-sport civil society sector representatives and are thereby poor generators of bridging social capital (2008: 78). Similarly, organisational practices with reference to the inter-organisational coordination and connectivity of sport clubs in Scotland for instance, are based on situational, *ad hoc* processes rather than on formal contracts of cooperation that have an enduring character, which implies weak bridging strategies being developed (Allison, 2001). Unlike in Europe, however, in the context of a small, rural, Australian communities, certain studies indicate that interconnection between sport as well as non-sport organisations has proven to be fertile (e.g. Hoye and Nicholson, 2011;

Spaaij, 2009b). Namely, Hoye and Nicholson argue that sports clubs in the above stated context 'are central to the creation of [bridging] social capital especially through their investment in strategic partnerships, advocating on behalf of their clubs, and enhancing community relations' (2011: 472). Hence, there is potentially a case for engaging sport organisations in endeavours for the creation of bridging social capital at organisational and inter-organisational levels. Yet, this will vary and will depend on the multi-layered contextual and situational factors in which sport and community development occurs.

3.3.3 Linking Social Capital in Sport

The vertical connectedness of sports associations to relevant national and local institutions in charge of sports development, including vertical networking between individuals and groups from different social strata (Spaaij, 2009b: 1135) is represented by *linking* social capital. It is manifested in the ability of the state to bolster community social capital through supportive actions aimed at sport development (Spaaij, 2011). On the same note, Coalter asserts that this type of social capital has clear policy and analytical implications for the role of certain types of sport organisations, such as the significance of their relationships and negotiation positions towards governing bodies of sports and local self-government (2007: 58). However, although linking social capital has received less attention in sports social capital research circles, existing studies do demonstrate that opportunities for the creation of linking social capital in and through sport are far more limited in comparison to bonding and bridging opportunities (Spaaij, 2009b) being mostly dependent on the broader contextual circumstances for linkages to be created. In his recent book, *Sport and Social Mobility*, Spaaij (2011) inspects the facets of linking social capital through four contextually different sport programmes in Australia, the Netherlands and Brazil. As is illustrated, the lack of state support in offering employability prospects for Brazilian youth led to the establishment of vertical links between participants in the inspected sport programme and its providers, who acted as institutional agents most notably through the programme's participant-mentor relationship, influencing an increase in stocks of linking social capital for both individual participants and the sport organisation. Like previous sport programmes, Rotterdam Sport Steward Programme served as a hub for the creation of the beneficiaries' linking social capital through sport programme officials who simultaneously hold placements in the government, education, police or in municipal government. On the other hand, the erosion of state social capital in northwest Victoria, Australia affected the realm of sport by limiting opportunities for the creation of

linkages with institutional agents in the North Central Football League (Spaaij, 2011: 116). Yet, it is indicative that exploration of linking social capital in and through sports deserves further attention so as to elucidate the complex mechanisms involved in its creation and reproduction, but equally, the determination of the nature of its elements such as trust and norms of reciprocity and the nexus with other forms of social capital created in the realm of sport in different social, political and cultural contexts. The current corpus of literature in the area only modestly addresses these aspects of social capital. The present research, therefore, attempts to work towards illuminating some of the above missing aspects in the specific context of Serbia.

3.3.4 Negative Social Capital in Sport

The focus of the present discussion has been mostly streamed around positive social effects stemming from social capital creation in and through sport. Still, overemphasising the role of sport in building positive social ends and community cohesion would prevent critical examination of its actual potential to assist in social capital generation processes. Sport can and does lead to inequalities and social divisions, most often reflected in nationalism, racism, sexism, gender discrimination, xenophobia, homophobia—'[t]his is the dark side of sport that matches the dark side of social capital' (Long, 2008: 223). As Long rightly states, '[it] is not just an issue of whether people want to participate and be included but one of whether that inclusion is likely to generate the kind of social capital that will encourage trust and reciprocity' (ibid.).

Some evidence points to the negative consequences of primarily but not exclusively bonding social capital in sports, contributing to a more general debate on the 'downside' of social capital (Spaaij and Westerbeek, 2010). Namely, the strong bonds that usually prevail in sports clubs, associations and teams can make these networks of interactions homogenous encouraging hostility towards outsiders (ibid.) while provoking divisions on various identity grounds. It is, hence, valid to claim that sports organisations and sports teams are likely to facilitate strong bonding social capital, promoting insular behavioural values and norms that may provoke social division at the expense of tolerance (Nicholson and Hoye, 2008). In the same vein, social capital created in a sporting context represents a sphere that reflects the diversities present in wider society (Numerato and Baglioni, 2012: 596). Besides, the 'dark side' of social capital may appear between the sporting context and the structures external to sport, such as

business or the government (ibid.). Moreover, the dark side of social capital in sport may be reflected in individual and group interests and affiliations to certain sports to influence the policy and normative frameworks of national sport governing bodies (Long, 2008; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012). In that sense, the dark side of social capital may be understood as a misuse and manipulation of trust and norms of reciprocity in an attempt to indulge narrow individual or group interests that are usually in conflict with sport and community development objectives imposing necessity to examine the nature of organisational sport social capital at the level of sport governance (Numerato and Baglioni, 2012: 596). Specifically, this interconnects linking and bridging social capital in sports to induce negative social processes such as corruption, clientelism, nepotism, institutional distrust and a lack of transparency in the administrative endeavours of sports organisations, but it also displays the role of bonding social capital and its connection to other social capital forms in creating the dark side of social capital in sport. This study seeks to further investigate these links and interdependencies.

A study conducted by Numerato and Baglioni (2012) on the downside of social capital in the Italian and Czech contexts of sports organisation is of particular interest for this research as it portrays a body of evidence on mechanisms of the creation and distribution of the dark side of social capital that sports governing bodies can induce. Namely, Numerato and Baglioni provide an account on the social capital base of sport governance as fragile and secured by practices of false and manipulative trust (2012: 600). They distinguish between three facets of negative social capital within and around sports governing bodies relating to the creation and maintenance of bonding and linking social capital. Its first trait corresponds to the use of dense sport-related networks characterised by the generation of bonding social capital to influence ownership over material and symbolic resources of a sports governing body that results in harm to other members of the sports organisation, the federation and consequently the wider community (2012: 600-601). A second instance of the dark side of social capital is mirrored in misuse of social networks established to enhance sport development for individual political or economic advancement in contexts external to sport, indicating close coalitions between politicians and, notably, football movements in the countries where research has been carried out (ibid.). Hence, the dark side of social capital is often represented in linkages between sport and politics. Finally, a lack of transparency and credibility in the governance practices of the inspected sports evidently indicates

deliberate manipulation of trust generating negative social capital in and around the respective sports federations.

Although the above study opens up important questions with regards to the negative effects of social capital on sport development and governance, while significantly contributing to the often neglected issue of the dark side of social capital at the meso sport governance level, it does not explicitly draw the link between bonding and linking social capital, failing to characterise this relationship, which is of import if one is inclined to comprehensively address the above issues. The present study seeks, therefore, to contribute to filling this gap.

Finally, as shown above, the potential to develop positive or negative social capital in and through sport, its governance and practice, will vary widely depending on micro, meso sporting and macro community contextual settings.

3.4 Sport and Community Benefits

Comprehensive understanding of the social benefits of sport for multiple communities requires critical investigation of the interrelations between the concepts of sport volunteerism as a form of active civic participation and social cohesion including social integration and social inclusion, on the one hand, and the concept of social capital on the other. Before tackling the above issues, however, it is worth briefly delineating the meaning of the concept of *community* while answering the question of how it is understood as a synthesised notion in this study.

The concept of community is interpreted in many different ways and has been ascribed a vast spectrum of meanings in the social sciences. While there is a lack of a unified definition of the concept of community, however, Hillery asserts that the common component of community definitions in the literature concerns *people,* including social interactions, geographical area and common ties (1955). Therefore, as Jarvie has recently commented, *community may be characterised by social relations in a given location underpinned with a sense of collective identity* (2006). Yet, the notion of identity, as Jarvie suggests, is often a 'surrogate term for community where community refers to the social roots of individual identity' (2006: 327).

Synthesising the most common characteristics of the contemporary concept of community, Jarvie suggests that a community is not a homogenous entity, it consists of

overlapping entities with new forms developing constantly; it encompasses a range of social ties and common interests which go beyond geographical proximity; it benefits and enhances the prospects of individuals, through fellowship, development and learning and instilling a strong sense of rights and responsibilities; it creates a sense of identity and common culture; it must be democratic; it must be tolerant towards, and respect other communities, and where disputes arise, there must be mediation by law; communities in their various forms create civil society where the forces of decency can act to countervail anti-social behaviour; and, lastly, community is usually expressed through association with others in voluntary institutions (2006: 328).

Critically drawing from the present scholarly debate, the concept of community is understood in this research as a synergy of overlapping entities—*networks* as its structural component and social relations, interest, values and a sense of belonging as its cultural elements. In addition, although communities may be regarded as locality-free, this research perceives that the contextual setting in a geographical area impacts social and cultural values, interest and social relations, thus locality as an element of community is necessarily included in the concept. Evidently, such an understanding of the concept of community is closely allied with the notion of social capital and civil society in the particular context.

3.4.1 Active Civic Engagement in Sports: A Link between Sport Volunteerism and Social Capital

As outlined in Chapter 2, civic engagement has been treated as one of the key indicators of the level of social capital within a community and/or society as well as one of the main pillars of generation of wider socially cohesive processes. The forms of civic engagement are numerous, mainly established through civic participation, political participation, informal social connections, volunteering, and social movements (Putnam, 2000). However, the area that sport, civic engagement and social capital best intersect is *sport volunteerism*. In that sense, Putnam has suggested that membership in (sport) voluntary organisations or volunteering in formal or informal (sport) organisations, groups and movements contributes to the bolstering of generalised trust and norms of reciprocity, while generating social capital through established networks of relationships at the levels of the organisation, community and society (2000), contributing to social cohesion, citizenship and civil identity (Donnelly and Harvey, 2013). Moreover in compiling a social capital index, Putnam has used a number of

indicators to measure the level of social capital in the community where a half of the total number of indicators relate to volunteering, including other forms of civic participation that indicate a high correlation between trends in civic participation and the overall social capital index score (Cuskelly, 2008: 188). It is indispensible, therefore, to account for sport volunteerism in a social capital perspective so as to examine the multifaceted relationships that sport and social capital establish. In this vein, the focus of the present section is a discussion of the role of sport volunteerism in sport provision and its link to social capital, as an individual and collective asset.

In attempting to define volunteerism in general and volunteerism in sports in particular, one can notice that the common denominator in the available definitions of volunteering is that 'volunteering is unpaid work [that] involves time, energy, skills and/or abilities given freely in the context outside an individual's home' (Donnelly and Harvey, 2013: 55). Furthermore, Cuskelly approaches the definition of volunteerism (in sports) as 'unpaid helping activity, which, in sport, facilitates the participation of others' (2008: 190). Most of the available studies, government policies, programmes and evaluative reports on sport volunteering approach it, however, in terms of 'formal', registered membership in sports organisations, failing to scrutinise the level of presence, and the impact of non-registered, informal volunteering in sports, which is a very common form of volunteer engagement in specific sporting contexts. In contrast to the dominant trend in treating volunteerism in sport, however, Sport England (2003: 6) considered informal volunteering when defining sport volunteerism:

> Volunteering in sport is defined as individual volunteers helping others in sport and receiving either no remuneration or only expenses. This includes those volunteering for organisations [formal volunteers] and those helping others in sport, but not through organisations [informal volunteers].

Although various national surveys repeatedly report on informal volunteering as highly present in sport, to date, academic interest in this particular issue remains scarce. This fact calls for filling the present void.

Whether formal or informal, and despite various methodological challenges in measuring the volume of sport volunteerism, the literature reports that sport volunteerism is one of the largest single categories of volunteer services (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Cuskelly et al., 2006; Doherty and Misner, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Seippel, 2006, 2010) and the largest sector of civil society in many developed (and developing) countries (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Nichols, 2003; Seippel, 2006). For instance, Cuskelly asserts that the overall rate of volunteering as a percentage of the total

population varies between 26.7 percent in Canada to almost half of the population in England, 48 per cent, while sport volunteers represent between 18 percent and 27 percent of all volunteers in these countries (2008: 190). As he further points out, volunteering as an activity that involves 5 percent or above of a population, such as sport volunteering does, has a considerable capacity to impact sport provision and its development in the community (Cuskelly, 2008: 191). This implicitly suggests that high levels of volunteering through formal or informal sports organisations are an important contributor to the development and circulation of community social capital. In this vein, as asserted by Donnelly and Harvey (2013), volunteer sports administrators, executives, coaches and referees contribute extensively to sport delivery, particularly at the grassroots sports development levels, impacting on socialisation practices both in terms of participation and sport delivery, which displays the dynamics of interconnection between volunteering, sport development and social capital.

Additionally, in order to further conceptualise the link between sport volunteerism and social capital the questions addressing the demographic traits of sport volunteers and reasons for volunteering in sport require further attention. Namely, existing data, mainly originating from academe in developed countries, shows that sport volunteering is dominated by males belonging to the middle adulthood age cohort, full or part-time employed, most of them holding post-secondary education levels (Cuskelly, 2008). This suggests that relationships, coordination mechanisms and the ways social capital is created and maintained within sports organisation are gendered, reflecting more masculine norms of trust and reciprocity and fostering a stronger sense of male identity and dominance by virtue of volunteering in sport organisations (ibid.). Yet, the predominance of this group involved in sport volunteering may direct the ways broader bridging practices within and around sport organisations are established. Besides, except for a limited number of studies (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Spaaij, 2011, 2012, 2013), the issue of gendered social capital in sports characterised by an increased 'ethos of manliness' (such as in rugby league, for example) (Light and Kirk, 2000) and the ways socially cohesive processes, including sport volunteerism are constructed around particular forms of masculinity as one of the identity markers within the male group (Blagojević-Hughson, 2012) in a particular social context (Hughson, 2000; 2013b), deserves additional scholarly insight accounted for in this study.

In addition, the association between the level of education, status on the labour market, sport volunteering and social capital is reflected in correlative trends, as higher levels of

social capital within a particular organisational network—in this case voluntary sports organisations—are related to higher educational levels, and the stable employment position of an individual. As argued by some commentators, those who are less educated and are unemployed are less likely to possess wide networks of connections, which consequently inhibits their participation in voluntary engagements in general and in sport in particular (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Harvey et al., 2007; Putnam, 2000; Seippel, 2006). While the above assumptions have purchase, the relationship to a specific social context, the characteristics of communities, and social capital developed should be established when staging the above conclusions, as the contextual portrayal may significantly imbue the results in the above respect.

Besides, the changing nature of sport volunteerism incorporating a semi-professional orientation to involvement in sport voluntary organisations challenges traditional forms of volunteer participation in the sport delivery system. These challenges are mirrored in recruiting practices, higher demands on the work results of volunteers and time invested in volunteering, which consequently pose drawbacks in social capital formation in and around sport organisations (Cuskelly et al., 2006; Seippel, 2010). Additionally, contemporary sports organisations operate in increasingly demanding administrative, policy and legal environments which impose the engagement of volunteers with expert knowledge and skills, while excluding those who lack certain expertise (Cuskelly, 2008; Seippel, 2010). These changing characteristics of sport volunteerism, complemented with increasing pressures due to the latest global financial crisis as of 2007, may be regarded as additional factors affecting the degree and the nature of sport volunteerism, and hence, social capital manifestations and its levels in sport and the community. This research seeks, therefore, to incorporate discussion about the changing nature and meaning of volunteerism in the investigated grassroots and amateur sports in the Serbian context.

In furthering discussion of sport volunteering and its multi-layered connection to social capital, investigation of the reasons for volunteering in sports seems inevitable so as to widen the perspective from which to observe the ways links between volunteering in sport and social capital are established. It is, however, beyond the scope of this section to discuss the motivation theories in relation to sport volunteering but to introduce different motivational aspects of engagement in volunteer work within sports organisations. In that sense, Cuskelly asserts that the majority of individuals getting involved in sport volunteering predominantly do so through existing social networks

(2008: 195), indicating that the motivation to volunteer comes from the very social network an individual is involved with. For example, Tonts (2005) argues that, in rural Australia, social interaction and community benefit are the most common reasons for being voluntarily involved in sport, while Alison Doherty's (2005) Report on Canadian sport volunteers shows that the majority of volunteers become involved in order to help a cause in which they believe, to help an organisation's cause; because someone they are close to is involved in the sport or the organisational work or they have a friend who volunteers; through networks established through their children's involvement in sport; or because someone in the organisation asked them to join. Furthermore, Sport England's research on sports volunteering demonstrates that the most commonly indicated attractions to sport volunteering are the social benefits including friendship, giving something to the club and being part of the club (2003: 11). Bearing in mind that cross-country comparisons of the data need to be conducted with caution due to the methodological differences in their collection and analysis, including wide contextual differences, it is indicative from existing literature that the motives for and ways of involvement in sports volunteering are to a great extent grounded in social, sport and personal development, social interactions and community benefit via individual or collective social networks.

Finally, in an attempt to comprehensively cover the multidimensional nature of the motivational aspects for involvement in sport volunteering, Wang has identified five general motive types as most relevant to sports volunteers—altruistic value, personal development, community concern, ego enhancement and social adjustment (2004: 421). Altruistic values as a motive for volunteering relate to personal values and beliefs about the benefits of helping out people and getting involved (Hoye et al., 2008). Further, personal development concerns raising experience levels and being with people with similar interests, while community concern is focused on volunteering to make a contribution to the community (Hoye et al., 2008; Wang, 2004). Lastly, social adjustment refers to motivations regarding social interaction with other people (Wang, 2004: 421), while ego enhancement represents a motive to volunteer so as to feel needed and important to others and to be a part of a unique experience (Hoye et al., 2008; Wang, 2004). In social capital conceptual perspective, the presented typology suggests a strong connection between volunteering motives and the main elements of social capital, such as generalised or particularised trust and norms of reciprocity reflected either in altruistic value, community concern and social adjustment, or ego

enhancement and personal development. This link will be further examined in the context of the present research.

Furthermore, Cuskelly suggests two principal *factors* relevant to social capital development through sport volunteering: 1) time dedicated to volunteering (in years and hours), and 2) number of organisations an individual volunteers for (2008). The former factor influencing social capital corresponds with Harvey's et al. (2007) research on the link between sports volunteering and social capital in Canadian communities. They indicate that the relationship between social capital and volunteerism is related to the long-term volunteer involvement while short-term involvement does not show a consistent link between volunteerism and social capital creation (2007: 219). Likewise, Nichols (2003) considers the longevity of voluntary sport organisation, thus the longevity of sport volunteerism in an organisation, as a factor that has implications for social capital generation and distribution. In relation to the latter factor, Cuskelly indicates that volunteering in multiple organisations, as is commonly present in a sporting context, contributes more to the development of bridging and linking social capital via increased access to other local community and social networks (2008). While this account may possibly be validated through the relationship between types of sport volunteerism and social capital typology, deconstructing the stance towards the stake of particular social capital elements (networks, trust and norms of reciprocity) in creating and sustaining volunteer practices in sport, which should be accounted for in attempts to examine links between the nature of volunteerism and the nature of social capital in a particular social context.

However, while the sports context is considered, by a number of scholars and policy makers, a common site for the development of active civic participation through volunteering, the evidence to support this positive relationship between volunteering and social capital formation is still not exhaustive (Nicholson and Hoye, 2008). Nevertheless, some studies in the contexts of developed countries have demonstrated the above positive relationship. For example, Tonts contends that, in an Australian context, volunteering in a sports organisation represents a forum for building community social networks as a structure for the creation of mostly bridging social capital that connects people from different ethnicities, age, class and status groups (2005: 147). In the same fashion, Seippel argues that, in the Norwegian context, sport volunteerism contributes to the enhancement of generalised trust with significant

positive effects for bridging social capital arising from participation in voluntary sport endeavours (2006: 179).

In contrast, the characteristics of sport volunteers, the aspirations that influence volunteering, the changing nature of sport volunteerism and the challenges of social context presented in this section suggest that volunteering in a sports organisation, whether formal or informal, is more prone to creating bonding social capital, thus particularised trust and norms of reciprocity that circulate through networks of relationships attached to the relevant sports organisation(s) (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Cuskelly, 2008; Tonts, 2005). Additionally, as Coalter (2007) and Tonts (2005) suggest, a sense of identity and belonging generated through volunteering in a local community sports organisation may facilitate exclusionary practices pursued by dominant volunteer groups revolving around ethnicity, race, gender, age, class and status division lines. Posing barriers for volunteer involvement in sport, therefore, whether intentional or unintentional, reduces the possibilities for the development of bridging and linking social capital in and around sports organisations, although the level of social capital may not be significantly reduced (Cuskelly, 2008). Finally, the site for benefiting communities through sports volunteering is primarily seen through the inclusionary practices sports volunteering may contribute to, reflected in the creation of bridging and linking social capital (Coalter, 2010).

While the imperative to widen the scope of evidence demonstrating complex relational mechanisms between social capital, active civic participation in sports and community benefit remains high on the research agendas in the area, the contextual implications to the above relations need to be considered beyond the scope of the contexts of developed countries so as to contribute in a more comprehensive manner to knowledge in this field. This thesis strives to address that gap.

3.4.2 Social Inclusion and Social Integration as Indicators of Social Cohesion and Social Capital in Sport

Drawing from the previous discussion on the concepts of social cohesion, social integration, and social inclusion/exclusion and the relationship of these processes to the notion of social capital as outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the aim of this section is to narrow the conceptual framework of the thesis to the interrelation between sport and socially cohesive processes—social integration and social inclusion as social cohesion

sub-concepts relying on current research discourse in the field, from which data in the subsequent chapters will be interpreted.

Albeit often referred to in existing sport social capital literature, social cohesion in and around sport remains rarely investigated as a single concept. It is rather equated with the collective social capital in the community or the society, and the manifestation of civic engagement, social inclusion and social integration processes. This is not surprising as the aforementioned concepts are empirically difficult to separate. Social cohesion in sport may be the result of various multidimensional, socially inclusive and integrative processes that comprise increased cooperation and collaboration at various levels of sport's contributions to society while achieving collective goals. As Waring and Mason outline, however, it is rather difficult to distinguish between social cohesion and social inclusion, for example, as both terms emphasise active citizenship and participation within the community and within society more generally (2010: 518). More explicitly, while social cohesion (in sport) may refer to social unity and cooperation, social inclusion is more about enabling and empowering individuals to participate in society, to improve their life chances through enhancing their social experiences. In this vein, social inclusion in and through sport may be regarded as a path to wider social cohesion and equality, which is seen to contribute to stable and progressive societies (ibid.). In a similar fashion, Kelly (2011) in her research on socially inclusive processes through the 'Positive Futures' development programme, asserts that social cohesion and community development may be regarded as processes arising from sports-based, social inclusion interventions. Thus, stemming from the position of this research and existing debate within the respective literature, socially inclusive and integrative processes, including other relevant forms of civic engagement induced through sports-based programmes are taken in this study as parameters and sub-concepts of social cohesion—a proxy for community benefit.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the link between social capital and social cohesion, social integration and inclusion is reflected in active civic participation, partnership development, and involvement in a broad array of social networks in the community, displaying mutually fostering relationships. These inter-linkages may be associated with all three types of social capital—bonding, bridging and linking—although from Putnamian perspective more important for these processes to be achieved is the crossing of cleavages bonding social capital may induce at the expense of the other two forms of social capital, which are considered more beneficial from a wider socially integrative

perspective. The limitation of bonding social capital to induce social and economic regeneration is, however, a contested area. Namely, as argued by Coalter, bonding social capital 'can play a significant role in local social regeneration—for example, as an essential first step towards building collective confidence, cohesion and cooperation' (2010: 1383). Existing debate thus rather reinforces the thesis that bonding social capital may have undermining effects for the generation and sustainability of socially cohesive processes in and through sport, while highlighting the positive traits of bridging social capital for a range of social cohesion parameters. Yet, the discussion should not stop over these claims that frame the potential of particular forms of social capital to instil social cohesion, as social capital and its relationship to socially cohesive processes is a dynamic category prone to changing its nature in particular social fields and social contexts.

In general, there is widespread belief that sport has the power to make society more equal, cohesive and peaceful (Spaiij, 2009a: 1109). It is increasingly common to herald the social role of sport narrowed down to its ability to contribute to social cohesion, thus social inclusion and integration and social development through the establishment of mechanisms for social capital creation by national and international sport and social policy makers but with a scarce corpus of evidence provided to sustain these claims. Coalter suggests that although governments and international organisations concerned with global development have shifted the focus from non-evidence based to evidence-based policy-making, when it comes to the social significance of sport, emergent researches designed to inform policy show a general lack of evidence to support sport's power to make society more cohesive and equal (2007, 2010). In addition, as stated by Spaaij, there is a concern that social development through sport is imposed on marginalised groups in a top-down manner, lacking community engagement and shared interests (2009a: 1109).

It is worth further noting that the body of literature on the social benefits of sport often interchangeably uses the terms social inclusion and social integration (e.g. Bailey, 2005; Hylton, 2013; Kelly, 2011). One can conclude that the lack of clarity and the interchangeable use of these terms are based on the comprehensiveness and intersection between the forms of 'deprivation' or 'marginalisation' concepts. As the literature shows, those who are marginalised on poverty grounds are usually marginalised on an ethnic and/or disability basis. However, the wider social context has a say in the processes of understanding marginalisation and its types, as for instance, developed and

developing countries have different rates of poverty, different representation and treatment of ethnic minorities and, in many respects, different treatment of the disabled population. This also supports the context-dependent nature of the ways in which social capital is created in relation to processes of social inclusion and social integration.

Nevertheless, approaches to social inclusion and social integration may be twofold—increasing participation in sport by including socially deprived population categories, most notably the poor, to foster sports development and social inclusion in which sports are adapted and collaborate with parallel programmes so as to contribute to social development, with increased participation and access to sport as principal goals. This type of intervention Coalter labels as *sport plus* intervention (Coalter, 2007, 2010). On the other hand, *plus sport* programmes use sport's popularity, most often football, to attract young people to programmes of social development (ibid.). The first approach mostly refers to increased participation in 'sport for all' initiatives that contribute to individual, sport and social development (ibid.). In that vein, Waring and Mason (2010), in their study on the possibility for active citizens in deprived communities in Britain to access sport facilities and increase participation in sport, question whether social inclusion will follow directly from the increased opportunities for participation in sport that government programmes are providing and what mechanisms for social inclusion are to be employed. They conclude that the provision of new sporting facilities in deprived communities with open access to all is not sufficient for social inclusion to be achieved, but additional incentives to encourage the deprived population groups to get into sport remain necessary. These include targeting particular deprived groups, or outreach work and partnership building with local community representatives, which involves social capital creation in an attempt to induce social inclusion in socially deprived areas. Furthermore, Waring and Mason state that the positive link between active civic participation and increased social inclusion, promoted in policy circles, needs to be revisited as those traditionally marginalised experience barriers to inclusion in sport at the micro and macro levels (2010: 526). Thus, contribution to the promotion of social inclusion will be successful if multifaceted barriers to inclusion in sport are recognised and dealt with (ibid.). Similarly, in evaluating the relationships between physical education, sport and social inclusion, Richard Bailey stipulates that evidence is limited with regard to the processes by which children and youth may become socially included through sport, although some indications do exist (2005: 79). As he notes, access is a necessary first condition to inclusion in and through sport, while the issue of

agency—facilitation of inclusion through institutional incentives including marginalised youth in decision making—is a second immanent factor to increased social inclusion. In addition, the development of physical competence through sports programmes induces confidence and peer acceptance, which may be important conditions for social inclusion in sport per se (ibid.).

Likewise, Kelly has conducted empirical research on the potential of the 'Positive Futures'[1] programme of the Home Office to induce socially integrative processes through sport of young men and women who are marginalised on various grounds, including ethnicity, poverty, their position in the labour market, and juvenile delinquency (2011). She argues that programme participants saw 'Positive Futures' as an arena for practicing free leisure and sport, increasing social interaction with various groups of participants from the local community and as a pathway to increasing opportunities in the labour market, which overall positively impacted social inclusion. Kelly righty argues, however, that although sport plus initiatives can remove some barriers to sport participation for marginalised youth, including financial ones, and can provide opportunities for enhanced social networking, these activities remain only temporarily secured unless the structural conditions of their initial exclusion are addressed (2011: 133). In this aspect, sport programmes tackling issues of social inclusion may represent only a segment of wider social action contributing to community cohesion.

Furthermore, the issue of social integration and the social inclusion of ethnic minorities, as well as other marginalised population categories into mainstream society through sport plus and plus sport programmes and the role of social capital in these processes has been questioned by a number of authors (e.g. Coalter, 2010; Crabbe, 2008; Elling et al., 2001; Harda et al., 2011; Hughes and McDonald, 2008; Kelly, 2011; McConkey et al., 2012; Müller et al., 2008; Schulenkorf, 2012; Spaaij, 2009c, 2011; Storey, 2004, 2008; Tacon, 2007). Although central to Spaaij's study of the 'Sport Steward Programme' are the potentials of this sport programme to affect the increased social mobility of deprived youth in Rotterdam, social inclusion/exclusion of youth with ethnic minority backgrounds and its link with social capital and social mobility is elaborated (2009c). Namely, according to the author, social integration and inclusion in wider society has been achieved, albeit on a small-scale, through increased

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[1] The title of this thesis does not draw from the title of this programme, but from the concept of 'positive history' and its link with 'positive futures' as indicated in Chapter 1.

opportunities for the social mobility of deprived youth who participated in the programme (ibid.). On the other hand, social integration and inclusion of the programme's stakeholders was prompted through enhancement of social connections, providing them with access to social networks inside and outside the programme, which affected integration and access to various resources. Critically, however, as Spaaij asserts, within the wider context of political concern about social integration and inclusion into mainstream society, serving disadvantaged youth is not the ultimate goal of sport-based programmes, their aim is rather to impose a practice on these youths so as to secure social order and make them integrate into mainstream society (2009c: 263). Yet, in order to more comprehensively approach the issue of social integration in and through sport, it is indispensible to locate people's position within the wider social, economic and political contexts so as to gain an understanding of the structural causes of deprivation and disadvantage, and of inequality of opportunity in sports (Spaaij, 2011). Therefore, as Hylton points out:

> The challenge for sport is how to lay down the necessary structures and opportunities to engage individuals and communities through a process of participatory dialogue that ensures an inclusive provision that recognize[s] diverse social needs. (2013: 105)

As has already been indicated, fostering participation in and through sport for social inclusion and integration of deprived population groups is often done by means of the 'popularity' certain sports have, so as to attain increased attention and foster integration through sport. In this vein, football has served as the most effective tool to attain minority groups (Müller et al., 2008). In the context of this particular study, the GFP in Serbia is designed to attract deprived social groups by means of the 'popularity' of this sport with the aim, amongst others, of bolstering socially cohesive processes. As stipulated by Müller and his colleagues, however, multicultural integration through the Amsterdam World Cup football event these authors examined, has been rather scarce. The tournament, which gathered various ethnic minority groups, aimed at development of intercultural respect and tolerance that could potentially result in multicultural integration. Participation in this event, however, dominantly served participating teams in the strengthening of ties within their own communities, thus bolstering ethnically based bonding social capital and promoting their countries of origin (ibid.). These results correspond with the above connotations, reflected in the need to account for multi-layered, structural and contextual factors underpinning issues of integration through sport. In this vain, as suggested by Elling et al. (2001), further engagement in recognising aspects and mechanisms of structural, socio-cultural and socio-affective integration through sport is needed.

Finally, the social integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities has been prompted as an emergent theme in the policy circles of many developed and developing countries over the last two decades. The challenge of translating the rhetoric of rights into practice for persons with disabilities remains, however, an on-going issue within policy and institutional realms. As a part of the efforts to address this issue, the potential of sport to bring about a decrease in the marginalisation of the above social category has lately been the focus of research. In this vein, the Special Olympics initiatives, the objectives of which relate to the empowerment of youth with an intellectual disability have lately triggered scholarly attention. This is particularly important in the light of this study as issues of inclusion and integration in and through sport facilitated by the Serbian branch of the Special Olympics, as a partner within the GFP, reside among emergent research subjects. In that regard, the existing evidence shows that sport has the potential to integrate persons with disabilities into sporting practice, resulting in the creation primarily of bonding social capital between practitioners with disabilities, with an increasing capacity to yield bridging relational practices with the regular population category, affecting social integration into the wider community (e.g. Dowling et al., 2010a; Dowling et al., 2010b; Elling et al., 2001; Harada et al., 2011; McConkey et al., 2012). Additionally, as stipulated by McConkey and his colleagues who studied the repercussions of the Special Olympics programme for social integration, it is likely that development of personal capacities through participation in sport increases social integration and inclusion in the educational and employment fields too (2012). Participation in sporting organisations, however, cannot eliminate social inequalities experienced by this population reflected in their wider social position (ibid.). Thus, in line with Hylton's (2013) and Spaaij's (2009c, 2011) assertions, McConkley et al. suggest a multi-sectoral approach to generate structural integration, while the creation of social capital, tailored to local circumstances may be a critical step in which sport can be an important contributor to socially cohesive processes (2012: 12).

In sum, the socially integrative meanings and functions of sport are contested terrains. As Hylton stipulates, while sport as a tool with a set of properties has a documented capacity to contribute to a certain extent to a social integration agenda, the scale of sport's contribution to social integration and consequently to social cohesion requires more explicit exposition in terms of efficacy in specific conditions and closer melding of efforts and resources with other public policy arenas in order to create an increased integrative impact (2013: 111). While testing sport's potential to affect and sustain

socially cohesive processes in a particular social context, this research will accentuate the abilities of social capital and its particular forms and elements to permeate multiple community developments and will in this way contribute to the scholarly debate about the link between the nature of social capital and the nature of social cohesion against the backdrop of semi-peripheral Serbia.

Sport-for-Development and Peace

Although the socially integrative functions of sport discussed in this section fall under social development initiatives that sport can assist in, wider, global development through sport touching on many social and economic issues is increasingly in the foci of many international and national institutions that assist reforms in the developing world. Levemore outlined that sport's contribution to development is reflected in socially cohesive endeavours amongst which peace-building in post-conflict settings has received particular attention in development initiatives (2013). Thus, taking into consideration the contextual scope the current research has been carried out in (see Chapter 2), the issues of promotion of reconciliation and tolerance through sport by means of creating social capital as a contributor to the renewal of relational strategies among different ethnic groups of a given population is of particular interest for the following discussion.

As Cora Burnett asserts, building bridges and forging relationships of care and mutual coexistence through sport are particularly challenging in post-conflict areas where hatred is entrenched in national or ethnic values (2009: 1194). But unlike a peace-building mobiliser, modern sport has had an ambiguous relationship on ethnic and national cleavages as a conflict instigator—in serving to dramatise ethnic or national antagonisms, as for example, in the contexts of the Balkans or Northern Ireland (Giulianotti, 2011a; Nielsen, 2010). From the duality of its social role in conflict settings, sports governing bodies and international agencies concerned with development continuously insist on sport's role in promoting peace and tolerance at various levels of sport programmes provision and participation (Giulianotti, 2011a, 2011b). For instance, the United Nations have staged the potential for reconciliation through sport as follows:

> From international events to the grass roots, sport brings people together […], making the playing field a simple and often apolitical site for initiating contact between antagonistic groups. Consequently, sport can be an ideal forum for resuming social dialogue and bridging divides […]. (UNOSDP, 2003: 4)

But, social research into sport-for-development and peace mostly revolves around

individual projects throughout developing world contexts (e.g. Dorokhina et al., 2011; Gasser and Levinsen, 2004; Schulenkorf, 2010, 2012, 2013; Schulenkorf et al., 2011; Schulenkorf and Edwards, 2012; Schulenkorf and Sugden, 2011; Sugden, 2006), however with increasing interest in producing more analytical and comprehensive work in this field (Giulianotti, 2011a, 2011b). Still, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on the potential of sport programmes to contribute to conflict resolution and reconciliation in divided societies. This is, amongst other factors, a consequence of the gradual involvement of academics in international 'talkfests' on sport's potential to foster peace-building in the capacity of international organisations' workshops and roundtable participants, who instead of being engaged in bringing research-based insight into these forums, add just another voice of agreement that provide the international organisations concerned with development with the means of servicing their programmatic aims without actually taking steps to enact contextually-based meaningful change (Hughson, 2013b: 944).

Nonetheless, existing studies in the area have shown mixed results concerning sport's potential to instil reconciliation processes. Thus, while researching the 'Football for Peace' initiative for Jewish and Arab children in Israel, John Sugden came to the conclusion that the programme outcomes moderately contributed to the wider efforts of peace-building in divided societies like Israel (2006). He indirectly asserts that contextual-wise social capital creation and maintenance strategies while delivering sport programmes aimed at bringing divided communities together, are the key principles needed to be applied in gaining a broader impact on peace-building through sport interventions (ibid.). Likewise, planning in detail the nature of the contact experience—both on and off the football pitch—is important in ensuring that relationships and bonds can be formed on the basis of equality, inclusiveness and shared understanding (Sugden, 2006). In a similar manner, researching the potential of grassroots sports events to contribute to reconciliation by means of the creation of social capital in Sri Lankan divided communities, Schulenkorf and his colleagues contend that sport-for-development initiatives have a certain ability to positively impact social cohesion and increase cooperation among divided communities, although, as they argue, negative relational outcomes may arise as a result of such initiatives (Schulenkorf et al., 2011; Schulenkorf, 2013). More specifically, in two separate studies on sport-for-development and peace events, one featured participation across divides of age, gender, class and ethnic/national background, while another was concerned with the participation of

children from ethnically divided communities in mixed sporting teams, they discovered that the events had the potential to increase social cohesion between divided communities by creating the social capital reflected in socialisation, increased trust and reciprocity, newly established contacts and networks, and tolerance by promoting cross-cultural varieties (ibid.). On the other hand, as these studies show, parts of the divided communities did not accept the idea of inter-community cohesion and celebration, constraining the wider effects from the implementation of sport developmental programmes (Schulenkorf, 2013). As Schulenkorf further suggests, this speaks to the limits of short-term sport events to bridge severe cultural and social divides (ibid.). Therefore, in the context of a divided society in a developing country, long-term provision of sports-related activities and exchanges that sustain intercommunity cooperation and togetherness beyond the single event needs to be facilitated so as to induce the creation of sustainable intergroup relationships (Schulenkorf and Edwards, 2012).

Furthermore, in the context of divided communities that underwent gross human rights violations during the conflicts from 1991 to 1999 in the Western Balkans, international and national organisations concerned with development advocated that sport-for-development and peace initiatives hold the potential to contribute to regaining social cohesion among divided communities, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Still, the issue of the dearth of research evidence to support such claims is evident. This research, in its own capacity, attempts to illuminate and add some of the missing aspects of socially cohesive endeavours in the domain of sport-for-development and peace initiatives in Serbia and the region of the Western Balkans, particularly in relation to sport as a bottom-up tool that informs transformations in coexistent social and cultural frameworks in local, national and regional contexts.

On the other hand, and as it has been indicated before, sport, and particularly football, as one of the common defining characteristics of the populations of the Balkans, has contributed to the intensification of nationalistic sentiment and conflict during the period of dissolution in the former Yugoslavia. The football riot that occurred in Zagreb's Maksimir stadium in May 1990, during a match between Zagreb Dinamo and Belgrade Red Star, is seen by some commentators as the start of the dissolution of the Yugoslav state (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004) while for others football is considered as the beginning and end of the transition of the former Yugoslav republics, but most notably Serbia (Nielsen, 2010). Consequently, in rebuilding a positive notion of sport's

ability to reconcile divided communities in the Balkans, several sport-for-development and peace initiatives have been implemented (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004; Hosta, 2011). The most prominent is the Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) of the Cross Cultures Project Association, a non-governmental organisation from Denmark, the operation of which is underpinned by the premise that community divides in the Balkans are not longstanding, or hostilities deeply ingrained, thus the ice that has to be broken to re-establish contact and cooperation is relatively thin, which affords a greater impact of this sport-for-development and peace initiative to be achieved (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). In addition, as Gasser and Levinsen suggest, development of inter-community cohesiveness strongly depends on multi-layered inter-relational strategies employed between local, national and international bodies concerned with advancement of both football and peace agendas (2004). Discussion of this particular initiative, as a part of the GFP in Serbia, and its impact on reconciliation via the creation of socially cohesive processes and social capital will be furthered throughout the empirical chapters to follow.

In general, existing evidence in different post-conflict settings points to an increased degree of positive contribution that sport can make in rebuilding reconciliation and tolerance processes by initiating social cohesion between divided communities. Yet, although its impact in peace building, from an isolated perspective, has often been moderate, with rather short-term effects, according to Jarvie, even in the short-term, it has the ability to make a difference (2011). Yet, reflecting upon underneath factors in reconciliation through sport-for-development initiatives, including the stake of generation of durable collaborative strategies between multiple actors in pursuing sport, social and peace development agendas for long-term development seems to be further needed.

3.5 Sport Policy and Social Capital: The Link between Pro-social Sport Development Strategies and Social Capital

The aim of this section is to provide a critical overview of the contemporary literature on the incorporation of the concept of social capital into sport policies in developed countries, so as to lay the foundation for the empirical analysis of the nexus between Serbian sport policy and social capital in Chapter 8 of this study.

Social constructs in direct relation to the concept of social capital—social cohesion,

social inclusion and integration in and through sport and active civic participation, discussed in the previous sections of this chapter and of Chapter 2, have gradually gained currency in the sport public policy discourse. Over the past two decades, development through sport became one of the key aspects of national and international pro-social sports policy (Coalter, 2013; Sakka and Chatzigianni, 2012), as reflected in a shift from the traditional welfare approach of developing sport in the community to developing communities through sport (Coalter, 2007). This has evoked increasing interest among policy-makers and academics to draw links between sport policy and social capital, while conceptualising the latter as a goal and a tool of public policy.

In this vein, social capital as a sport policy goal involves policy measures that directly affect the levels of social capital via a set of activities to increase active civic participation, decrease exclusion practices in and through sport, and thus provide support for social cohesion enhancement, while social capital as a sport policy tool reflects the externalities of social capital creation through linking with various education, health, youth development, anti-discrimination, social mobility and other sport and non-sport policy initiatives and sectors within the institutional realm, including cooperation and coordination between the relevant stakeholders involved in policy processes across fields of common interest (see Chapter 2). This study thus looks at the ways in which social capital as a tool in Serbian sport policy-making and implementation operates and contributes to achieving social capital as a specific policy goal.

Furthermore, in reviewing the link between social capital and public policies in sport while constructing an analytical framework for the empirical chapters to follow, the issue of policy process and their nexus with different political and social traditions and particular institutional contexts comes to the fore.

According to Bramham, policy process compromises four main stages: policy problem definition, the planning of policy strategies, policy implementation and the evaluation of policy outcomes (2008: 11). The cycle starts up again concerning outcomes from the original policy intentions. This systematic model of policy-making is often referred to by policy-makers in order to justify choices among many alternatives and to support particular policy outcomes (ibid.). Therefore, as Bramham suggests (2008), such a policy-making model represents a *rational* process articulated as neutral and technical. It represents a model of clear stages in decision-making, implementation and evaluation

of policy outcomes—a model of good practice. Practice shows, however, that various power interests and irrational models creating unintended consequences and undermining general public interest are instrumental to policy process. This is reflected in lobbying and alliance building—practices central to policy processes (Coalter, 2013). Furthermore, commenting on the practice of policy decision-making and policy implementation, Bramham emphasises that:

> [S]uccess and failure in policy terms may have little to do with rational decision making to solve long-term problems but rather more to do with short-term gain to appease interested parties, to secure re-election and to maintain control over the policy process. (2008: 12)

Additionally, policy process and policy in general is underpinned with predominant political ideologies in a given setting. Political ideologies provide a particular perspective on a society's key issues, debates and problems that need to be addressed while mapping out mission statements as to how the society needs to be changed (ibid.).

The intention here is not to enter into a deeper debate on political ideologies and their relation to sport policy-making, but to indicate that different political ideologies shape differently sport policies in general and sport's social function reflected through sport policies in particular. Thus, increased use of the concept of social capital in sport policies is, amongst other factors, a reflection of political ideologies and traditions within which governments operate in the developed world. But outside the context of developed countries, knowledge on the use of the concept of social capital as, *inter alia*, a reflection of a dominant political ideology (and practice) in sport policy discourse is limited. This thesis hence, opens up space for modestly compensating for missing knowledge in the context of 'transitional' Serbia (see Chapter 8).

3.5.1 Conceptualisation of Social Capital in National and International Sport Policies

The sport policies of developed countries such as Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand and the Scandinavian countries employ the social capital concept and its accumulating outcomes both as a policy goal and a policy tool for the development of sport and communities. Comprehensive analysis of national sport policies from a social capital perspective is, however, rather scarcely represented in the contemporary literature on sport and social capital (e.g. Agergaard, 2011; Coalter, 2007, 2010, 2013; Collins, 2003; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; 2009; Persson, 2008). From analysis of the

sport policies of some of the countries listed above[2], conducted by Hoye and Nicholson (2008, 2009), it is indicative that common ground in conceptualising social capital throughout sport policy discourse does exist. This study, thus, aims to contribute to the analytical debate about social capital representation in sport policy in the particular context of the Serbian public policy environment and to provide an insight into common and dividing points within the realm of sport public policies and social capital in different developmental contexts—those of Serbia and the European Union (hereinafter the EU)—while also indicating how the researched sports respond to these particular sport policy aims. Thus, although the semi-periphery may have a very similar institutional and policy context comparing to the core (or, in the case of Serbia, the EU), a huge variety of institutional and policy practices exist in different countries (Blagojević, 2009b), requiring additional scholarly attention.

Firstly, the available literature suggests that policy-makers untestedly embraced the concept of social capital as a means of community development through sport assuming that, through involvement in community-based sport, an individual will be able to experience a range of social benefits such as belonging to a group, friendship and identification with the local community. Sport organisations are deemed to be sites for the generation of social connections, social cohesion and social integration embedded in bridging social capital, while the bonding character of social capital, sometimes reflected in the exclusive and discriminatory practices of certain sport organisations, has been vastly ignored in sport policy discourse in developed countries (Hoye and Nicholson, 2008, 2009). Overly simplistic conceptualisation of sport participation creating social capital means that policies are not fully concerned with the conceptualisation of all forms of social capital, overemphasising the positive externalities of the creation of bridging social capital in sport. Furthermore, policies do not adequately conceptualise the benefits and causes of social capital creation, stating that the successes of elite national sport teams leads to increased levels of national and social cohesion, and is, hence, justification for increasing funding for elite sports in respective countries (Hoye and Nicholson, 2008). Likewise, the national sports policies Hoye and Nicholson analysed, indicate that social capital is an outcome of participation in sport, considering sport organisations as social capital producers rather than consumers (2008, 2009). Finally, as the authors suggest, there is agreement between national sport policies about the potential for the creation of social capital not only in

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[2] Australia, Canada, England and New Zealand.

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sport organisation but also through sport organisations mostly reflected in civic engagement through sport in the form of sport volunteering, which presumably enhances the prospects for wider social engagement through social networks (ibid.).

Drawing back to the factors that shape policy-making process, it is indicative that the reason policy-makers use social capital is that it resonates with the dominant political ideologies of developed countries and the theoretical promise of the social capital concept rather than with the instrumental aspects of sport policies. This is not surprising as social capital is a largely theoretical construct the embracing of which, within political circles, is still in the embryonic phase. Yet, it is also indicative that the embracing of the social capital concept within sport policy discourse is based on assumptions of a positive cost-benefit relation to social capital creation and maintenance mechanisms induced in and through sport. Furthermore, the rationale for utilising the social capital construct in sports policy may relate to a justification of financial investment in elite and community level sport (Hoye and Nicholson, 2009). Elite sports development adds to national and international recognition and, thus, receives priority in sport funding at the national level. Likewise, sport policies rely on the promise that elite sports increase social cohesion through elite sport successes at national and/or international sporting events, fabricate role models that further impact greater participation in sport at a local level, and induce various social benefits that genuinely arise from elite sport development and success. Moreover, sports organisations are sites that promise the constant attraction of people of various backgrounds such as those experiencing different forms of deprivation who might be socially more connected and mobile. This might be one of the main rationales that sport policies rely upon in connecting sport and social capital (Hoye and Nicholson, 2008). Critically, however, knowing that policy processes are grounded in dominant political ideologies and interests, governments' focus on maintaining community cohesion, sustainability, social development and active civic participation through the work of sport organisations points to neo-liberal political stream attempts to shift the notion of responsibility for development from the government realm to the realms of civil society and communities (ibid.).

Internationally, the social capital concept has gained wider policy-making attention within the EU and the United Nations' (hereinafter the UN) pro-social sport policy agendas.

Although comparative analysis of the EU's sport policy framework and Serbian sport policy from the social capital perspective will be comprehensively discussed in Chapter 8, at this point it is worth discussing the basic aspects of the EU policy in tackling issues of social capital development in and through sport.

The EU has in recent years been increasingly engaged in sport promotion and development through sport. Acting within the Treaty framework established by the European Council, the European Commission (hereinafter the EC) is responsible for proposing policies, secondary legislation and supervising policy implementation (Parrish, 2001). The EC's *White Paper on Sport* and accompanying *Action Plan 'Pierre de Coubertin'*, published in July 2007 (EC, 2007a, 2007b), represent key policy directions of the EU's involvement in sport regulation matters. It marks the EC's first comprehensive statement of its approach to sport-related issues (EC, 2007a). Albeit not legally binding on Member States, the *White Paper* makes a momentous contribution to the debate on the future of European sport (Hill, 2009). Significantly, one of the key priorities of the *White Paper* is the societal role of sport that comprises the potential of sport to assist in social inclusion, integration and equal opportunities, promoting volunteering and active citizenship. As stated in the *White Paper* '[s]port is an area of human activity that greatly interests citizens of the European Union and has enormous potential for bringing them together, reaching out to all, regardless of age or social origin' (EC, 2007a). Sport is thus seen as overwhelmingly cohesive and to a great extent positive. Such an understanding of sport dominates this policy document. Firstly, participation in sport and inclusion in the organisation matters of amateur sport clubs is considered as a contributor to active civic engagement in sport and in society in general (EC, 2007a). Besides, the *Commission Staff Working Document* on the background and context of sport in the EU, which accompanies the *White Paper*, declares that voluntary activities in sport strengthen social cohesion and inclusion and promote local democracy, while strengthening its socio-economic component (EC, 2007c). Secondly, access to sport, which should be granted to all EU citizens, is a starting point for greater social inclusion, integration, the advancement of equal opportunities and inter-cultural dialogue while again voluntary activities in sport contribute to the social cohesion and inclusion of vulnerable groups and are considered social services of general interest (EC, 2007a). Thirdly, anti-social behaviour mirrored in violent acts at sport events promoting racism, and xenophobia, is seen as an obstacle to social cohesion and integration through sport, the suppression of which is high on the agenda of EU

priorities in sport because 'all manifestation of racism and xenophobia […] are incompatible with the values of the EU' (EC, 2007a: 8). Finally, the EC supports a vision of sport as a contributor to development and peace, underlying synergies with existing initiatives by the UN, Member States, local authorities and private bodies are essential for this aim to be achieved (EC, 2007a: 9).

It is clear that the national sport policies of certain developed countries and the EU perspective on sport's societal role share a common policy ground. As has previously been discussed, this is reflected in an overemphasising of the positive role of sport in processes of *bridging* cultural, economic, ethnic, national, gender, disability and age divides between EU citizens, while generating increased social cohesion, social inclusion and integration and active civic participation, as results of social capital creation. Critically, such an approach may neglect factors involved in the processes and mechanisms that contribute to negative social effects that sport may induce but also misunderstand the key processes and mechanisms that lead to positive (or negative) social outcomes that sport has a stake in. Yet, it should be noted that sport's negative social characteristics have been recognised, although not comprehensively, while policy measures to tackle them have been recommended. Violence, racism, and xenophobia at and around sports events are subject to law enforcement and prevention that compromise increased cooperation and networking between Member States and EU bodies, indicating the value of social networking between the main stakeholders in resolving this pressing social issue in sport.

Besides, global recognition of sport's potential to build positive social outcomes particularly in the domain of development and reconciliation in developing and post-conflict countries via mechanisms of social capital creation has been advanced by relevant UN policies via policy recommendations for national government programmes in the area (Coalter, 2010; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008;). A set of policies (see SDP IWG, 2006, 2007, 2008; UN, 2005, 2006, 2010; UNOSDP, 2011) advocates the application of the social capital concept as an underlying tool in achieving development and reconciliation through sport. In this view, the UN clearly states that '[sport] is about inclusion and citizenship. Sport brings individuals and communities together, highlighting commonalties and bridging cultural or ethnic divides' (2005: i). More specifically, although the use of the social capital concept in particular UN policies resonates with both the positive and negative (UN, 2005: 2) social externalities of sports, it is more commonly related to the former. As stated in the *Report from the UN*

Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, sport may contribute to the creation of social relations, building connections between groups and individuals, mobilisation of volunteers and promotion of active community involvement and may, thus, help to build social capital (UN, 2005: 3). Although, some of the policy documents analytically delineate distinctions between forms of social capital (exclusively in a positive manner) and their contribution to social integration, reconciliation and increased tolerance in post-conflict communities, they fail to demonstrate mechanisms and processes that are involved in the development of desired social outcomes from the perspective of particular social capital typologies (SDP IWG, 2008: 215).

Ultimately, the EU sport policy framework strongly advocates increasing and standardising evidence to be applied in sports policy-making processes (EC, 2007a), which has resulted in the provision of 'soft' evidence to support policy orientation with regard to the relationship between sport and social capital. It is not clear, however, what mechanisms have been employed in providing evidence for the positive contribution sport could make in revitalising the social fabric. Thus, the claims of policy-makers on the overarching positive influence of sport on community development, civic participation, political and democratic engagement and reconciliation require additional scholarly support, grounded in facts that document sport's role in these processes (e.g. Coalter, 2007, 2010; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; Spaaij, 2009a).

3.5.2 Social Capital and Evidence-based Sport Policy

Overall, increased use of the concept of social capital in national and global sports policies, as has been already indicated, needs to resonate with transparent evidence-based rationales in policy-making to support its inclusion in the sport policy discourse, which as argued by some authors in the field, has seldom been achieved to date (e.g. Coalter, 2007, 2010, 2013; Collins, 2003; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008; Nicholson and Hoye, 2008; Smith and Leech, 2010; Spaaij, 2009a). Coalter has recently commented that the issue of evidence-based policy-making is about more than providing research findings for the expected policy outcomes, it is about choosing the evidence that supports dominant political ideologies and interests in a particular society or a particular development field (2013). More concretely, policy-making has involved a spectrum of factors that treat evidence from the perspective of the values, experience and expertise, tradition, habits, lobbying, and resources (ibid.). It has been already stated that ideologies and values direct the policy-making process, but at the same time dominant

values, and traditions within the policy environment underpin orientations in empirical evidence provision to support policy decisions. Likewise, there is a clear nexus between the experience and expertise of decision-makers and the relevance of policy evidence being promoted (ibid.). Moreover, the influence of lobbying groups on sport policy-making process makes for unsystematic and selective use of evidence promoting the interests of certain interest groups. This is particularly prevalent in the sport-for-development and peace sector, where lobby groups operate with evidence presented in such a way as to support the ideas they promote so as to further their own development agendas (Kidd, 2008). Finally, the issue of resources is a matter of decision when it comes to the orientation in investment in policy evidence provision. Namely, cost-effectiveness means that policy-making and evidence provision is not about what works best but what works at what cost and with what outcome (Coalter, 2013).

Despite the numerous factors, addressed above, that invade the reliability of sport policy evidence, Coalter suggests that a 'theory-based' approach to understanding the processes and mechanisms enrolled in sport policy implementation and subsequent outcomes may contribute to an increased degree of evidence reliability (ibid.). The core idea of this approach to sustaining evidence is the use of theory to build an analytical framework for policy evaluation so as to assess the mechanisms and processes at stake that will serve the purpose of policy inputs in the next policy-making cycle. This approach, as Coalter suggests, may bridge the gap between academic research and policy-makers not only by fostering relationships between researchers, policy-makers and policy practitioners, but also by developing and contributing to coherence and effectiveness in policy formulation and implementation (2013).

Thus, if polices are inclined to herald sport's significant contribution to social capital development, policy-makers and other relevant policy decision and evaluation parties would probably benefit from employing a comprehensive theory-based perspective, encompassing the processes and mechanisms at stake in social capital building in and through sport so as to claim the positive nexus between these constructs. So far, as shown presently, little has been done in that regard and the dominant reasons most probably resonate with dominant political interests, values, practices and traditions. Thus, in reflecting on sport policy process in the Serbian context, this study attempts to instigate discussion in this very context on the place and relevance of evidence in sports policy-making and its nexus with EU sports policy framework recommendations (see Chapter 8).

3.6 Sport's Wider Developmental Context: The Outlook for Serbia

The social capital model cannot be established once and for all as a positive or negative social product unless we contextualise it and unless we clarify the point of view from which we make judgments on the value embodied in the concept of social capital (Numerato and Baglioni, 2012: 605). Chapter 2 (Section 2.7.1) has, thereof, provided a snapshot on the Serbian transitional social space, including reflections on the nature of social capital in the country. Thus, by understanding that 'the space of sport is not a self-contained universe' (Bourdieu, 1988: 155), and is embedded in a wider social context, the aim of this section is to further focus attention on the contemporary sporting context in Serbia in order to underpin subsequent discussion on sport's role in social capital creation within a given social, political, cultural and economic context. Consequently, the aim of this section is to contextualise sport's place within a wider social context with an emphasis on development traits of the sport system, including its current organisational structure and funding models. In addition, a brief historical overview of sport development in the country that can assist in providing supplemental information on the issue is provided in Appendix 1.

3.6.1 Contemporary Sport Development System and Organisation

The end of the communist regime followed by the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the outbreak of the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia directly impacted the break with the old and the onset of the new stage in sport system (de)development in Serbia. This was largely reflected in the plummet of sporting results and the inability of newly emerged states to cope with the demands of system transformation posed by social, political and economic transition. Still, the Serbian (and Croatian) national teams remained recognisable on the international sporting scene, while the national league competitions largely lost their previous lustre. In addition, along with the continuously poor results of national sports clubs at European club competitions, for instance, grassroots level sport and sport in schools and universities suffered from decreasing quality and low participation rates (Šuput, 2011b).

On the other hand, the wider social role of sport modified its character. From the idea of fostering fraternity, solidarity and social cohesion in and through sport dominating the era of Tito's Yugoslavia, its role visibly transformed. Existing research has

demonstrated that as the divisive politics of ethnic nationalism began to spread across Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s, many football supporters from the successor republics, for example, saw the terraces of stadiums as a place to back the political objectives of the leaders in their uprising states (Čolović, 2000; Mills, 2009, 2010; Vrcan and Lalić, 1999). At the time, sport was chiefly used as a political medium for the mobilisation of 'national' hatred along ethnic lines in the newly emerged states of the former Yugoslavia, which was reflected in an increase of incidents of violence and hooliganism. In addition, the political crisis was followed by economic and social crises that influenced the emergence of corruption, clientelism, and a lack of transparency and control of the sport system in Serbia (Šuput, 2011b), impacting the creation of stocks of negative social capital at multiple levels of social interaction.

The factual transition of the sport system in Serbia did not begin immediately after the dissolution of SFR Yugoslavia in 1991. It was only in 1996, with the endorsement of the new *Law on Sport* that the system of sport embarked upon institutional reform. A number of reforming novelties were previewed by the new Law, such as a change of the organisational structure of the system, some of them addressing the modalities of ownership of sport organisations, and the roles and types of sport organisations (Šuput, 2009). The role of the state, however, remained pivotal in the system. While it was a step forward in the formal reformation of the sport system, inadequate policy implementation mechanisms and undergoing transformation of the wider social scene characterised by remarkable political turbulences in the periods during and after Slobodan Milošević's rule in Serbia, kept the Serbian sport system in a vacuum (ibid.). It might, however, be argued that from an institutional and policy point of view, the establishment of the Ministry of Youth and Sport in 2007[3], followed by the enactment of the first ever *National Sport Development Strategy* for the period 2009-2013 (hereafter as NSDS), including the new *Law on Sport* endorsed in 2011 (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2011a), signified a new layer in pursuing the reform of the sport system in Serbia.

Organisationally, the contemporary sport system in Serbia portrays a complex picture. Although it can be seen through two main layers—*governmental* and *non-governmental* segments—the number of organisations, their jurisdictions and networking modalities, indicate the compound structure of the system (see Figure 2).

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[3] Until 2007 within the government structures sport was governed by the Directorate of Sport, within the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia.

Figure 2. The Organisation of Sport in Serbia
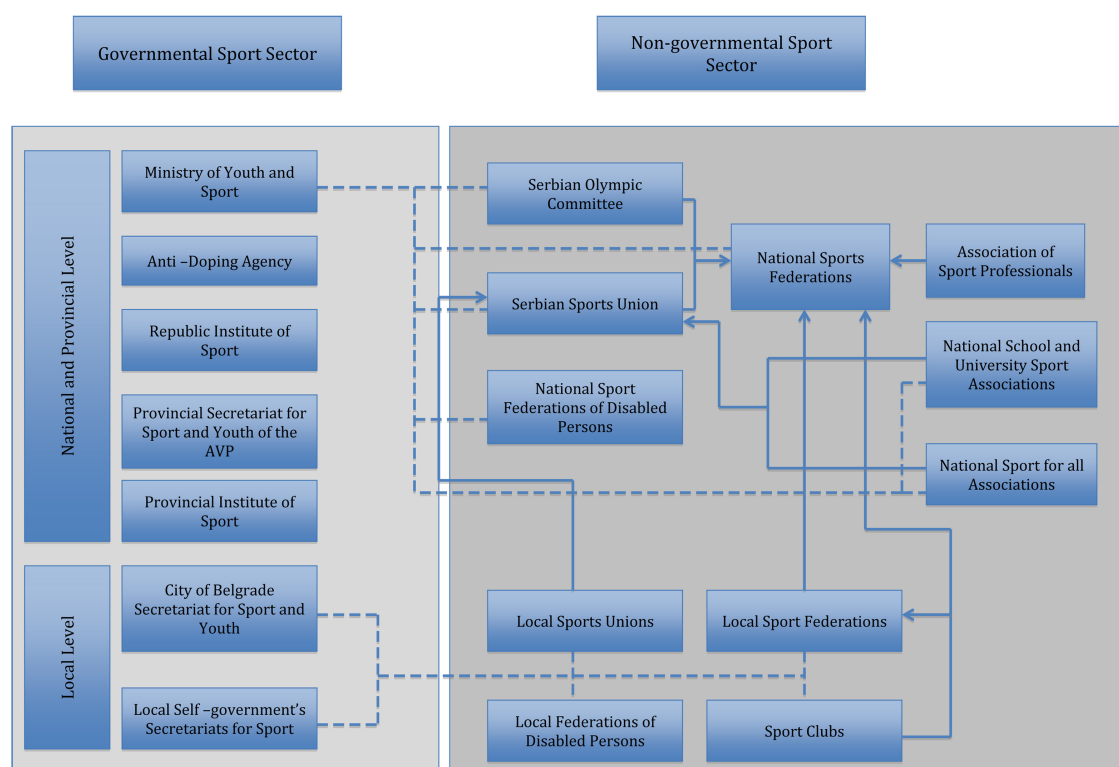
Sources: Šuput, 2009; Sportski savez Srbije, 2012; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2011a.

The *governmental* sport sector is oriented towards the regulation of the national sport and system development. In this respect, at the national level, the mandate of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, as the leading governmental (regulatory) institution in the field of youth and sport in Serbia relates to the implementation of national sport policies, administrative and professional supervision of related sport bodies and organisations, international cooperation and harmonisation of sport policies with the EU sport policy framework, and maintenance and development of sports infrastructure of national interest (Sportski savez Srbije, 2012; Šuput, 2009). At the provincial and local levels the Provincial[4] and the City of Belgrade Sport Secretariats and Local Self-governments' Sport Secretariats operate in line with provincial and local sport development plans. Additionally, the Anti-doping Agency of the Republic of Serbia is responsible for the prevention and control of doping and the implementation of anti-doping measures, while the Institutes of Sports are in charge of the development of different scientific disciplines in the field of sport and the provision of assistance to

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[4] Provincial Secretariat for Sport and Youth of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

governmental and non-governmental sport bodies in various sport development programmes (ibid.).

The *non-governmental* sports sector, is one of the largest within the civil society sector in the country—with 10,250 sports organisations out of a total of 19,907 civil society organisations registered in 2013 (A.R.S. Progetti S.P.A., 2013). At the top of the organisational organogram are the Serbian Olympic Committee (SOC) and the Serbian Sports Union (SSU). The jurisdictions of these organisations have long been a subject of incoherency and rivalry as clear-cut roles were difficult to perform without overlapping domains of activity. Yet, the enactment of the new *Law on Sport* defined the domains of their jurisdictions, which resulted in increasing operative endeavours of these core sport organisations in Serbia.

The Serbian Sports Union is an umbrella organisation of all district, city and municipal sport unions, and national sport federations. According to the 2011 *Law on Sport*, Article 104, the SSU's main role is to work towards development of 'sport-for-all', school sport, sport in the police and the army as well as elite sport in non-Olympic categories. It is also responsible for the development of the system of categorisation of sports and athletes (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2011a). In close cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Republic Sports Institute it is also involved in decision-making about future system development (Sportski savez Srbije, 2012). Moreover, membership in this organisation is granted to 84 national sport federations and 138 territorial sport unions (ibid.). According to Šuput, this is by far the biggest non-governmental sport organisation in the Balkans, actively involving more than 12,000 sport clubs in 2009 (2009). This being said, sport clubs constitute a cornerstone of the non-governmental sport sector, being the members of the corresponding national federation and accordingly the SSU (Šuput, 2009).

The jurisdictions of the Serbian Olympic Committee were, for the first time in the Serbian sport development history, defined by the 2011 *Law on Sport*. Namely, the primary role of the SOC is to foster the development of elite sport in Olympic sport categories such as programming and preparation of the national Olympic team for the Olympic Games, the categorisation of Olympic sports, international sport diplomacy as well as involvement in overall national sport development strategies, representing an additional scope of its engagement within the system of sport in Serbia (Sportski savez Srbije, 2012). Likewise, as a member of the International Olympic Committee, its

mission abides to principles of expanding the idea of Olympism and sport development in general (Šuput, 2009). Membership in the SOC is secured for the national sport federations of Olympic sports that are simultaneously the members of international sports organisations covered by the Olympic Games programme (ibid.).

Finally, sport disciplines for persons with disabilities are represented through unions and associations of disability sports, the development of which is reliant on direct support from the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2012a). The organisational structure of this segment of sport development is to a great extent compliant with the organisational structure of the sport system for the regular population. Namely, the Serbian Paralympic Committee is responsible for the development of Paralympic sport disciplines, while the Serbian Sports Union of Disabled Persons is an umbrella organisation involved in the development of non-Paralympic sports, elite sports for disabled persons as well as recreational activities for the disabled. However, overlapping jurisdictions between these two organisations but also other organisations active in the field, such as the Serbian Special Olympics and the Sport Union of Deaf Persons, are more than perceptible, suggesting underdeveloped organisational and structural mechanisms including a lack of application of horizontal and vertical networking practices within the entire sport system.

Furthermore, the financial portfolio of the sport sector in Serbia shows that the majority of funding contributions are regulated through the state, provincial and local self-government budget allocations. More precisely, the sport system in Serbia is funded through three principal sources: a) directly through the state budget, along with resources from the budgets of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (APV), local-self government budgets and indirectly through the state's taxation system and public (state-owned) enterprises b) sponsorship and donations from the commercial sector and c) the commercial activities of sports organisations.

The Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia (hereafter as MYS), as a direct allocator of state budget funds in the field of youth and sport development is responsible for the distribution of resources to regular and specific programmes of the non-governmental sport sector, as its main beneficiary, including allocations of funds for the maintenance of sports infrastructure of national interest (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008; Šuput, 2009). According to the *2013 Budget Law* (Vlada

Republike Srbije, 2012a), a total of 3,325,216,000 Serbian dinars[5] were allocated to the MYS in 2013, while more than half of the total budget of the MYS was distributed to the non-governmental sport sector's regular and specific programmes, which met the criteria of general interest for sport development at a national level (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2012a). Simultaneously, the MYS distributes the Sports Budgetary Fund as a sequence of the Government's Lottery Fund to the non-governmental sport sector and sport infrastructure projects.

At the local and provincial levels, direct funding is regulated by the laws on the APV and local self-government (LSG) budgets. The APV's budget funds are allocated to the Provincial Secretariat for Sport and Youth and the Provincial Institute of Sport, which manage grant distribution to non-governmental sports organisations in the APV. On the other hand, locally, sport organisations, associations and clubs, local sport infrastructure, local sport competitions and school sport are all funded through LSG budgets in line with locally defined criteria. There is, however, an on-going debate among sport professionals and government officials on ways to reform the currently inefficient, non-transparent system of sports funding at the local level (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2012b). As discussed at a series of conferences on sport development at the local level held throughout Serbia, the principal issues that need to be addressed in pursuing further reform in this area, are defining transparent criteria for the funding of sport through local sport strategies, capacity building of LSG officials responsible for sport financing, and developing sustainable horizontal networking and cooperation mechanisms between the LSGs and the local sport unions (SKGO, 2013).

Moreover, *indirect* sport financing, as an additional form of funding, is performed through public revenues and sources of taxation. Namely, sport organisations as a part of the non-governmental sector are, according to the *Law on Value Added Tax*, Article 25 (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2012b), exempt from VAT (Value Added Tax) payments. As indicated by the NSDS, however, the current taxation policy allows for numerous misuses within the system of sport by those registered as sport associations who use their official registration status in the field of sport to be exempt from taxation (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). This issue poses the question of *control* of the system of sport financing, recognised by the state policy-making

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[5] According to the official currency exchange rate on 31 December 2012, total of budget allocated to the MYS was 29.153.345,403 EUR or 23.818.285,046 GBP.

community as a priority to be systematically dealt with in the near future (ibid.). On the other hand, *indirect* sport financing is additionally based on the contributions of public enterprises directly funded from the state budget. Yet, the system of grant allocation to sport organisations lacks the implementation of transparent mechanisms for sport funding, permitting misuse of the public funds (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). In supporting the above claim, the State Audit Institution of the Republic of Serbia (SAI), for example, has repeatedly reported on the irregular practices in sport financing and misuse of funds for sport by a number of public enterprises in Serbia (Državna revizorska institucija, 2013a, 2013b).

Secondly, sport development in Serbia relies on donations and sponsorship from commercial enterprises. This segment of the sport financing system is, however, excessively non-regulated and is characterised by a non-transparent culture and criteria of implementation in grants allocation, including sparse networking and cooperation practices established with other relevant sport system financing institutions (Ekonomski institut, 2007). That said, analysis of financial reports of commercial enterprises does not provide a precise account of the level of investment into sport solely as it is jointly funded from budgetary lines allocated for culture, science, education, religion, humanitarian work, and ecology (ibid). For example, according to the Serbian Institute of Economics, allocation of the first hundred commercial enterprises ranked by the total sum invested in the above budgetary line in 2006 was 4,962 million dinars, or 65.4 percent of total expenditures (Ekonomski institut, 2007). Thus, the reforms in this segment of sport system financing wait to be further pursued.

Finally, sport financing from the commercial activities of sport organisations represents an even blurrier segment within this system. The level of contribution to sport development through the commercial activities of sport organisations has not, to date, been assessed in Serbia as the money flow cannot systematically be traced (Šuput, 2009). Therefore, one of the main priorities of the NSDS 2009-2013, the key sport policy document, is to pursue a cluster of reforms in this particular domain, including setting up a transparent system of entire sport financing, foreseen as operating via multilevel networking principles (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). Yet, current practice shows that although the system of sport financing formally abides by the rules of legal and policy provisions in the sector, actual implementation of these provisions is often replaced by political decisions that adhere to certain political

interests in sport development (e.g. Georgijev, 2012; Odavić and Femić, 2012; Šuput, 2011b).

The sport system in Serbia is still in transition and is continuously underpinned by numerous challenges that call for further organisational, legal, financial and social reform. In that regard and of interest for this study, development of grassroots sport, including amateur sport, was up until 2008 characterised by a progressive negative trend reflected in, amongst other things, decreasing participation trends, poor state of sport infrastructure and equipment, and insufficient financial support from the state (Georgijev, 2012; Šuput, 2009). This negative developmental trend has to some extent, however, been suppressed by the policy driven establishment of the system framework in this area and investment into networking of the educational institutions and the national sport federations that coordinate action aimed at the implementation of grassroots sport programmes in the respective disciplines (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2012b). Yet, except for isolated initiatives to be discussed in the empirical chapters of the study, networking practices have not been comprehensively applied to the grassroots and amateur sport sectors. For example, although developmental aims in the domain of sport for the disabled populations categories (as a segment of grassroots and amateur sport) have been defined, including amongst other things networking at different levels as one of the key developmental instigators, this domain of grassroots and amateur sport largely continues to operate in isolation, often lacking the establishment of inter and intra cooperation and coordination mechanisms, while displaying a slow pace of development (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2012b; Šuput, 2009). Furthermore, while the issue of increasing participation by girls and women in grassroots and amateur sports, and in sports governance, has been recognised by the principal governmental and non-governmental sport bodies (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008; 2012b; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2009), reforms in that regard chiefly continue to cover issues of the sector's developmental assessment gaps, while initiatives to cover the existing lacunas show moderate implementation trends. Additionally, similarities in the sport system reform pace may be found in the domain of volunteer engagement in sport in general and in grassroots and amateur sports in particular. Having been recognised as the backbone of sport and social development (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008), volunteerism in sport still operates under unregulated system

principles (Šuput, 2009), the formal and informal nature of which make it difficult to assess the extent to which it contributes to sport development in Serbia.

The snapshots of the contemporary sport development context in Serbia have thus shown that it is in a state of flux, characterised both by a developmental vacuum and by a reformist inclination. It is a dynamic, yet unstable reforming area that calls for advanced tools for a coherently functioning system. In light of this study, these tools may comprise the enforcement of sustainable, horizontal and vertical networking to increase the system's efficiency and positive developmental trends, while limiting the creation of interest-led networks that operate on the principles of the generation of negative community social capital.

3.7 Summary

This chapter has detailed the multi-layered nexus between sport and social capital by extending the conceptual framework of the thesis provided in Chapter 2. Following the structural logic set out in the previous chapter it embarked upon the situating of sport within the twofold definitional scope—precise and flexible—placing greater emphasis on the latter, which considers social and cultural contexts as decisive in understanding the notion of sport (Coakley and Pike, 2009), while underlying analytically-wise advantages of the former. In this manner, a distinction between *established* and *emerging* sports relevant for this research has been provided, accounting for the social, economic, and cultural factors underpinning this typology.

It is further argued in this chapter that, as a product of social processes having the potential to imbue multilevel relational practices in a sporting and wider social context, sport's place in social capital creation is multifaceted, flowing between socially positive and negative outcomes poles. Although it is often indicated in the literature that the prevailing form of social capital in sport relates to *bonding* relational endeavours as a form of 'identity work' (Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009), different shares of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital usually simultaneously circulate within and through sport (Hughson et al., 2005), being highly dependent on multi-layered sporting and social contexts.

Furthermore, while a mutually positive relationship between sport and socially cohesive processes, including sport volunteerism and social capital, has been evidenced recently, it still represents contested terrain in terms of the degree sport can contribute to the

creation of collective social capital and, hence, wider social development. As has recently been debated, while sport programmes are increasingly considered as tools for achieving wider social and community benefits, in order to be sustainably achieved socially cohesive processes, require the establishment of structural conditions through a network of institutions that work to remove barriers and the causes of exclusion, and civic inactivity. Thus, although according to existing scholarly debate, sport's place in the wider social development is not central, it has the potential to contribute to social cohesion from which respective communities may benefit (Jarvie, 2011).

Building upon scholarly debate about sport's potential to instil a scale of community benefits, development through sport became one of the key aspects of national and international pro-social sports policy agendas (Coalter, 2013; Sakka and Chatzigianni, 2012). Therefore, relying on the accepted policy-making model, national and international sport policy-making pools embarked upon the implementation of pro-social sport policies based on the premise of the integrative power of sport as a developmental force within society. Yet, as is reported in the literature, it is indicative that the reason policy-makers use social capital in sport policy agendas, is that it resonates with dominant political ideologies, the cost-effectiveness of the application of the social capital concept and the theoretical promise of the social capital concept, rather than on instrumental aspects of sport policy and research evidence that backs such a policy-making approach. Thus, it is suggested that in order to overcome 'soft' policy evidence shaped by dominant political traditions in sustaining sport's positive role in social capital creation, a theory-based perspective encompassing processes and mechanisms at stake in social capital building in and through sport should be employed so as to claim a positive nexus between these constructs (Coalter, 2013).

Finally, while the portrayal of the particular sporting context and its position within the macro social scene rounds up discussion about the factors pertinent to the issues of social capital in sport (to be discussed further in the subsequent chapters), it simultaneously provides for multi-layered comprehension of the strong relevance of context in this perspective. Therefore, although sport in Serbia has a long developmental tradition, its contemporary development builds upon socialist system legacies and post-socialist system transition. Consequently, the state-interventionist model remained pivotal in the Serbian sport system, affecting its policy-making dimension, organisational structure, and system of financing. However, while the transition of the sport system in Serbia is on-going, it lags behind mainstream social

reforms and sport policy objectives calling for additional organisational, legal, financial and policy system restoration accompanied by a cessation of the practice of creating negative social capital, so as to contribute to both sport and wider social development in the country. Issues such as those discussed above will be the limelight of this research.

In the next chapter key methodological issues are considered.

CHAPTER 4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The present chapter establishes the research strategy employed in this study. The strategy that has been utilised correlates with the study's main purpose that of the exploration of the social benefits of sport seen through a social capital perspective, reflected in the lived experiences and contexts in question. Hence, the nature of the study, the conceptual framework and the research questions it addresses instruct determination of the methodological tools to be employed so as to yield evidence in response to the research objectives. This chapter elaborates on the research process through which evidence has been collected and analysed.

The chapter begins with methodological consideration of the research orientation—the adopted research strategy including research aim, objectives and the main research questions—in justification of the selected methodological approach, that of case study research. Following this, the chapter moves on to look in detail at specific methodological issues, comprehensively addressing the data collection methods employed, triangulated between research interviews, documentary sources and direct observation of research cases, including discussion of sampling procedures and outputs and research ethics. Finally, the process of data analysis is delineated, along with the limitations associated with this particular study.

4.2 Methodological Considerations and Research Orientation

The methodological orientation of this research is informed by the nature of the principal aim of the study—*critical interrogation of the social benefits of sport explored through the theoretical concept of social capital in the context of Serbia*. In other words, as the study seeks to assess the extent to which and the ways in which, sport activities (governance, development and participation) foster or impede the creation of different forms of social capital and the related social benefits, focusing on correlations between sport development and community development, including the role of pro-social sports policy in the Serbian transitional context, it adopts a qualitative investigation approach of contextually (locally) shaped 'lived experiences, processes and meanings' (Spaaij, 2011: 7). Likewise, it reflects upon recently debated approaches to the investigation of

social benefits of sport in different social and cultural contexts (Kay, 2009; Spaaij, 2011), that can extend understanding of complex and multi-layered processes through which individuals and the community may benefit from sport (Kay, 2009: 1188). Additionally, the recent corpus of research aimed at exploring the interrelation between sport and social capital increasingly practiced qualitative, or mixed methods approaches, in search for evidence on sport's social impact in different social contexts (e.g. Dudwick et al., 2006; Kay, 2009; Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Kelly, 2011; Misener and Doherty, 2012; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Persson, 2008; Schulenkorf, 2013; Schulenkorf and Sugden, 2011; Spaaij, 2009b, 2009c, 2011; Tonts, 2005), which may lead to the assumption that 'researching within an interpretivist paradigm might perhaps predispose analysis of the social world to taking a qualitative form' (Amis, 2005), in a context-specific research environment.

In parallel, comprehensively considering the methodological shortcomings in evidencing collective and individual social capital creation mechanisms, types and levels, the methodological approach selected for this research further reflects upon the debated limits of quantitative and 'secondary' resources methodological approaches in investigating the cultural aspects of social capital in differing social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Although quantitative research methods uphold empirically rigorous, unbiased and objective research standards, a number of important traits of people and communities such as identities, perceptions, meanings of social relations and beliefs, for instance, cannot be framed only by numbers or insightfully understood without reference to the specific situations and contexts of relevance for the research results (Dudwick et al., 2006). In that regard, as was already indicated in Chapter 2, some of the drawbacks in relation to Putnam's social capital observation in *Bowling Alone*, concern difficulties with quantifying the complexities of social interaction in the investigation of social capital in relation to social capital's cultural dimensions in a particular context (Bowles, 2008; Edwards and Foley, 1997). Hence, in his later works Putnam himself made a shift to the adoption of a qualitative dimension of investigation, stating that he and his colleagues '[have] descended from statistical heights of *Bowling Alone* to ground level' in *Better Together*, striving to evidence lived experiences of individuals and communities (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003:5) in social capital creation and maintenance. In this vein, the present study adopts a qualitative research approach as vital for examining the complex issues of causality, process and context (Dudwick et

al., 2006) in relation to the nexus between sport and social capital in the specific social setting of Serbia.

Thereby, in striving to respond to the main research aim through in-depth qualitative investigation, as has been shown in the introductory chapter, this thesis sets out the research focus on the following objectives:

a) Analysis of the nature of social capital created and maintained in and through *established* and *emerging* amateur team sports in Serbia—*the grassroots football programme* and *rugby league.* In providing the context for the above analysis this objective additionally includes a contextual investigation of the development of these sports—their developmental trajectories and organisational workings in Serbia.

b) Investigation of the abilities of the grassroots football programme and rugby league to create and sustain social cohesion, social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation in the form of sport volunteerism in and through sport, including the investigation of the link between the nature of socially cohesive constructs and the nature of social capital created and maintained in and through the researched sports.

c) While cross-cutting between afore obtained evidence will yield sport social capital models for the researched sports, including their role in the generation of multiple community benefits, the analysis of the Serbian *sport public policy context* from a social capital perspective, will assist in completing the analysis on the nexus between sport, social capital, community benefits, and the social and policy contexts underpinning these developments. This will ultimately result in a set of pro-social sports policy recommendations, in the concluding chapter, aimed at a 'positive future' for Serbian sport.

Hence, in order to meet the principal aim and deriving objectives, the research addresses the following questions (RQs):

RQ1. What are the developmental and organisational contexts of the grassroots football programme and rugby league in Serbia?

RQ2. What is the nature of social capital in the context of the researched sports?

RQ3. How does social capital generated in and through the researched sports, contribute to the development of social cohesion via active civic participation, social inclusion and social integration?

RQ4. How/why does the social context of Serbian society impact on the development of social capital in and through sport?

RQ5. How/why does Serbian sports policy address issues of social capital development in sport and in the community through sport?

The first research question aims at understanding the developmental contexts of *established* and *emerging* sports. Likewise, it explores developmental trajectories, the organisational workings and governance practices of these sports within the meso sporting and macro social contexts in Serbia.

The second research question builds upon the first by providing an understanding of the nature of social capital developed and developing in the researched sports, its creation mechanisms, and factors underpinning the forms of social capital elements within the resulting social capital model. In more abstract terms, this question explores the dynamic and transferable nature of extracted social capital models while shifting the course to the social implications of the generated models, which are to be addressed with the next research question.

Thus, the third research question investigates the abilities of accumulated social capital *in* and *through* sports to induce socially cohesive processes *in* and *through* sport. While it interrogates the nature of these processes as sources and outcomes of social capital in sports it simultaneously explores how they affect wider community benefits.

As stipulated above, the role of context is the key to research of the social impact of sport inspected through the concept of social capital. Thus, the fourth research question refers to the role and the place of contextual factors in shaping the nature of social capital in and through sports, including social determinants resulting from the specific nature of socially cohesive processes—social integration, social inclusion/exclusion and active civic engagement.

Finally, building upon the role of the micro, meso and macro contexts in social capital generation and maintenance, investigation of the sport policy context from a social

capital perspective is the focus of the fifth research question of the thesis. This research question seeks, therefore, to explore Serbian sports policy discourse and the role of the state in social capital creation and maintenance, including reflection on nexuses between the progress of the country in the EU accession processes, the required policy related reforms implemented as part of this process, the place of the concept of social capital within contemporary pro-social sports policy discourse in Serbia and responses of the studied sports to particular social capital public policy objectives.

4.3 Methodological Approach

This research features a qualitative, multiple-case study design. The research design rationale is derived from the nature of the thesis' aim and the specific objectives, which comply with Yin's understanding of the notion of case study research as a methodological strategy that investigates contemporary phenomena within its real-life context, notably when the boundaries between context and the phenomena in question are blurred (2009: 18). According to Yin, the case study as a methodological strategy is reliant upon multiple sources of evidence 'with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion […] [that] benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis' (ibid.). In addition, Robert Yin suggests that a case study research methodology is recommended when: a) there is no control over events and b) there is a focus on contemporary events (2009: 8-11). This thesis covers both criteria.

Moreover, although inductive in nature involving identifying and refining research questions and issues emanating from the process of data collection, the study relies upon a conceptual framework grounded in theoretical propositions that structure and guide empirical investigation of the selected cases. As such the conceptual framework provides tools for concept driven data analysis while allowing for new theories to emerge from the analysis. In this vein, the conceptual framework of this study is informed by social capital theory and its application to the investigation of the sport's social impact, '[which] serves as an anchor for the study and is referred at the stage of data interpretation' (Baxter and Jack, 2008: 553). On the other hand, it is considered here that flexibility in social research processes is a prerequisite and an advantage that allows the emergence of new themes and constructs (May, 2011). Thus, methodologically, this thesis should be best perceived as *a conceptually and data driven qualitative multiple-case study* research endeavour.

4.3.1 Case Selection

The multiple-case study approach has been applied so as to provide more compelling results and make interpretations and explanations more vigorous (Yin, 2009). However, in contrast to what Yin suggests as applicable logics in designing a multiple-case methodological strategy—*either* replication logic (foreseeing similar results) *or* contrasting results logic (2009: 54)—this research abides to neither exclusively, instead applying both interchangeably. Namely, the wider meso sporting context is embedded in a macro social context and the macro social context in general firmly connects the *emerging* and *established* sports case studies, allowing for possible replications, while on the other hand, the opposing developmental position of these cases in their meso context possibly allows for the provision of contrasting results relating to the nature of social capital and related socially cohesive processes. Likewise, as context is the key to the case study approach, the investigation of the *sport policy framework* in Serbia from a social capital perspective, as a distinctive case, interrelates the above cases by binding them into the meso and macro contextual setting while providing evidence on public policy mechanisms and processes of social capital development in sport as a part of the context in which the selected cases are embedded. Hence, the boundaries between phenomenon and context are blurred (Yin, 2009), which demonstrates the case study research strategy as a highly reliable choice for this study.

First, case selection in this thesis draws on the distinction between *established* and *emerging* sports, stemming from the degree of sport development, its organisation, strategic aims and particular sporting and wider Serbian social contexts as previously discussed, complemented by the policy context for creating social capital in sports, reflected in the role of the state and the public policy framework in these matters. Moreover, the above distinction has elements of *sport development* and *development through sport* (or sport-for-development) (Coalter, 2007; Spaaij, 2011), a distinction represented to differing extents throughout the selected cases. For instance, rugby league, as an emerging sport in Serbia, is primarily concerned with *sport development*. On the other hand, while the GFP is committed to sport development, the bulk of its programmatic aims concern issues of *development through sport*. That said, the strategy of case selection incorporates one additional aspect—focus on the particular number of initiatives within the GFP of the Football Association of Serbia. Namely, the GFP has wide-ranging responsibilities in the domain of football development, underpinned by the 'football for all' philosophy. These responsibilities fall under the following

programmatic domains: football for children of regular and deprived population categories, including youth football for the disabled, women's football, amateur football, veteran football, youth elite football, futsal and street football. Still, this research focuses on particular initiatives in the domain of *football for children and youth* of the regular and deprived population categories, relying on the potential of this population to best imbue both the processes of *sport development* and social and cultural *development through sport* in the community. Yet, in broader terms, the case selection strategy, within the domain of established sport, has taken into account probing of football's ability to establish the framework for bottom-up, positive social and cultural change in Serbia, and thus potentially impact upon 'positive futures' in this sport by, amongst other things, counterbalancing the practices of deviant sporting and social developments this sport is often associated with.

In contrast to the GFP, rugby league as a case study has been approached comprehensively. In addition to examination of sport development dynamics as one of the defining characteristics of a majority of emerging sports in Serbia, with rugby league featuring increased developmental momentum, the case selection strategy in the domain of emerging sport has relied upon the following criteria: a) the dearth of critical writing on rugby league development in different social contexts (Cottle and Keys, 2010), thus undocumented social histories in the Serbian (and Yugoslavian) context; b) the tradition, origins and contemporary development of this sport in its heartlands, stemming from a wide array of divisive practices (Collins, 2006; 1996; Cottle and Keys, 2010; Long et al., 1997; Spracklen, 1996); c) the characteristics and *ethos* of rugby league that presumably provide for increased team cohesion; d) the perspective of time-management and cost-effectiveness that resonates with previously established contact with gatekeepers, which made access to this sporting community easier and faster.

Finally, case selection additionally draws from the vast spatial dispersion of research cases, or in other words, the cases' potential to affect a wider scope of sport and social development impact in Serbia by covering a wide geographical area. For instance, the GFP operates nationally, regionally, and locally via 132 coordinators who are responsible for programme delivery at particular levels while rugby league clubs and associations are dispersed across Belgrade and the northern, central and southern Serbian regions (see Chapter 5).

Case selection has, hence, been performed strategically with the overall aim of providing strong evidence that may yield genuine understanding of the ways in which the chosen cases bolster or inhibit the development of different forms of social capital in the field of sport and the community, including related socially cohesive processes and how sports policy, including wider social setting, shapes the context within which these sports operate. It is envisaged to understand the selected cases individually with the objective of establishing fertile ground for identifying similarities and divergences that will allow for theory development (Spaaij, 2011).

4.4 Data Collection Methods

Data collection has combined multiple compatible research methods designed to best fit the aim and specific objectives of the thesis. As suggested by Yin, the principal strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use various sources of evidence, while 'the most important advantage of using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation and corroboration' (2009: 114-115). This research, hence, has incorporated the *triangulation* principle in both the data collection and data analysis stages so as to provide a holistic understanding of the studied cases (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

Accordingly, this research that has been conducted in Belgrade, with occasional visits to local communities where certain activities from the case studies have been practiced, and has employed the following research data collection methods: documentary sources review, individual and group interviews, and direct observation.

4.4.1 Documentary Sources

Because of their overall value, documentary sources play an important role in any data collection for the purposes of case studies (Yin, 2009: 103). As further suggested by Yin, the most important use of documents in case study research is to 'corroborate and augment evidence from other sources' (ibid.). Yet, in the case of policy analysis, primary documentary sources such as different policy documents, policy evaluations and reports on policy implementation and practice shift the primary research focus to documentary sources while additionally corroborating evidence from other sources, such as, for example, individual and/or group interviews. Still, in some cases, documentary evidence may show contradictory rather than corroboratory

characteristics, which calls for further triangulation and investigation of the research issue (ibid.).

Although documentary research is an on-going process with no time-span limits, in designing a research protocol for this study, some documentary sources have been retrieved prior to employing other data collection methods while the remaining sources were gathered continuously throughout the entire research process. Therefore, apart from the review of secondary sources such as scholarly journals and books, legal and policy reviews, doctoral dissertations, conference papers and web-based scholarly reports, the initial stage of the research included investigation of primary documentation the relevance of which was driven by the main research objectives. The types of primary documentary sources retrieved for the purpose of this research may be classified as follows: a) programme/project documents; b) official and working documents such as public policy, legislation, decisions, reports, strategies, statutes, public records and other official documents of the relevant stakeholders; c) media articles; d) archival sources and e) websites of the relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 4). Apart from media articles not available electronically, the above documents have been mainly retrieved via Internet research, while some of the policy documents have been provided by the stakeholders interviewed throughout the course of this research.

Furthermore, although the use of documentary sources is invaluable in searching for strong evidence, they need to be used in a careful manner in order to avoid inaccuracy and bias in their interpretation. Thus, the review of documentary sources needs to reflect the purpose the document was written for, as well as the specific audience other than that on which the case study was being conducted (Yin, 2009). Hence, the review of selected documents has been performed accounting for the issue of the purpose and intentions, in adherence with the research objectives, so as to be critically oriented in terms of content interpretation. In addition, review of certain documentary sources such as relevant public policy, media articles and official programme documents has served the purpose of contextualising research related issues, while assisting in furthering research design—that of the research interview phase.

4.4.2 Research Interviews

Fieldwork consisted of the research interviews as 'essential sources of case study research' (Yin, 2009: 106), which offered a depth of information that allowed exhaustive investigation of particular issues in a more accurate way in comparison to other forms of data collection (Amis, 2005). For this reason, interviews have been described in the literature as critical to comprehending *what, why* and *how* something has occurred in a given context (ibid.) and to gain insight into multiple realities (Stake, 1995). This study, therefore, uses interviews as a pivotal source of research data in examining the selected case studies. In other words, in order to critically reflect upon issues central to this study, the rationale for hearing the voices of relevant stakeholders, by employing interviews as a research method, was led by the necessity of understanding the role of human agency in a given context in sport social capital creation. In addition, the rationale for the use of interviews was derived from the flexibility to adjust interview scenarios to the informant's situation, to probe for more detailed and reflexive responses, and to discuss particular situations in more detail so as to obtain a richer set of data (Spaaij, 2011: 9).

Sample Selection Process

The interviews covered four main groups of stakeholders whose selection was instructed by the nature of case studies selected and the research objectives.

The first group included representatives of the GFP of the Football Association of Serbia and their implementing partners: regional, county and municipal Grassroots Football Network coordinators, programme volunteers, and the GFP partnership projects' managers and coordinators.

The second group of informants encompassed representatives of rugby league: officials from the Serbian Rugby League Federation and rugby league clubs, clubs founders, former and current senior players, coaches of senior and junior clubs and national team delegates, referees and rugby league veterans and pioneers.

The third group of informants was selected from the institutional and public policy realms of sports and civil society organisations active in the fields of sports and social development: representatives of state and non-governmental sector in charge of sport development, including non-sport NGOs cooperating with sports organisations.

Lastly, the fourth group of informants involved sports journalists, independent sports experts and former athletes. While the principal for the selection of the first three groups depended directly on the character of the case studies selected and the requirement to critically explore social capital worlds within these cases, the rationale for selection of the fourth group of stakeholders was based on the ability to critically reflect upon the sporting and wider social context in Serbia, in order to bolster the research data.

Furthermore, the sampling procedure for participants, within the respective group of stakeholders, was informed by two mutually complementing sampling techniques. Firstly, the purposive or *targeted selection* of key informants for the cases was performed with the aim of sorting out the individuals who were able to provide detailed insight into issues of interest for the study (Amis, 2005). This was done in two ways. Access to some of the key informants was provided by the research supervisor who approached them prior to the commencement of the research project, while the second round in gaining access to relevant informants involved additional identification of key informants or gatekeepers—a person who controls the research environment (Amis, 2005: 119) by the researcher, and then through whom other participants were identified and approached. Besides, the gatekeepers were also key to the provision of relevant documentary sources for the researched cases. Overall, the key informants and/or gatekeepers were central to the provision of assistance in gaining access to a particular research site, remaining informants and additional research data. The principal criteria that was used in the purposive selection was the level of expertise and duration of involvement in developmental matters related to the cases, the informant's position in the sport governance structure and the level of representativeness of the sample in general, so as to account for contrasting views.

Secondly, as suggested above, the snowball method was used as a sampling technique to further select participants for the study by asking key informants to recommend other potential respondents, so as to increase the sample's representativeness. In some instances, as argued by Spaaij, this sampling strategy may be problematic since it may lead to biased results if the key informants, who are usually in charge of development of the researched programmes, have an interest in proposing people to be interviewed who they believe will positively represent the case and its achievements (2011: 10). Hence, this sampling method may lead to under-representativeness by furthering non-critical voices. In an attempt to avoid this potential problem, the *individual* snowball sampling method was applied to avert recruitment of respondents instructed solely by the key

informants. This was done through contact with participants selected by the key informants who further identified potential respondents free from the key informants jurisdictions over further selection. Thus, the degree of potential bias and under-representativeness of the sample has been progressively decreased by advancing the snowball strategy application to the remaining interviews.

The Demographics of Participants and the Selection Process Outcomes

In total, 61 participants were interviewed through *individual* and *group* semi-structured interviews between September 2012 and February 2013. The majority of participants were male—55 in total, while only 6 interviewed participants, or 9.8 percent, were female.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants by Selected Groups

Participant Group	Male	Female	Average Age
First group: GFP	12	5	43.3
Second group: Rugby League	30	0	42.2
Third group: Sports policy pool	6	1	33.8
Fourth group: Independent sports professionals and experts	7	0	37.8
Total	55	6	39.3

As shown in Table 1, the average age of participants in the interviews was 39.3, with 38 of interviewees belonging to the 20 to 39 years old age cohort as indicated in Table 2. In balance, as further indicated in Table 2, 13 participants were aged between 60 and 82. The youngest participant interviewed was 20 years old, while the eldest was 82. Furthermore, as shown in Table 3, a majority of the participants had some level of higher educational experience. Significantly, moreover, 36 of the informants were holders of a university degree while, within this category, 9 had Masters of Arts degrees, while two were holders of a PhD degree. Hence, the sample incorporated informants with considerable educational levels. The significance of this exploration of the participants' demographics is related to the distinct role of the level of education in social capital creation and its maintenance, repeatedly highlighted by the founding

fathers of the concept of social capital—Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000).

Table 2. Distribution of Participants by Age Cohorts

Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
Number of participants	13	25	7	3	5	6	2

Table 3. Distribution of Participants by Level of Education

Level of education	Primary school	Seconda ry school	College or universit y student	College degree	Universit y first class degree	MA degree	PhD degree
Number of participa nts	1	12	6	6	25	9	2

On the other hand, the number of participants included in the study was not consistent with the number of research interviews held. In other words, some of the key informants of the GFP and rugby league case studies were interviewed twice in order to enable collection of up-to-date data, and in order to track developmental matters of interest for the cases studied. Likewise, a certain number of respondents selected were involved in the group interviews, which contributed to a disparity between the number of participants selected and the number of interviews conducted. In total, 51 individual interviews were held, while 3 group interviews were conducted to complement the individual interviews (Spaaij, 2011), each of these compromised between 2 and 7 participants. Additionally, some of the informants involved in individual interviews also participated in the group interviews. The distribution of interviews per group of selected participants is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Distribution of Individual and Group Interviews per Participant Group Sample

Participant Group	No. of individual interviews	No. of group interviews
First group: GFP	15 (1 gatekeeper was interviewed twice, which is	1 (3 participants)

	included in the total number of interviews in this group)	
Second group: Rugby League	22 (1 gatekeeper was interviewed twice, which is included in the total number of interviews in this group)	2 (2 and 7 participants, respectively)
Third group: Sports policy pool	7 (there was no repeated interviews in this group)	0
Fourth group: Independent sports professionals and experts	7 (there was no repeated interviews in this group)	0
Total	**51**	**3**

Whilst coverage of participants was considerably extensive, it is necessary to acknowledge that there were some limitations. Namely, while the level of cooperation and the interview response rate were high in the *emerging* sport case study, cooperation with the Football Association of Serbia that was essential for the pursuit of the *established* sport case study was somewhat limited. This was mainly reflected in the number of individuals interviewed. Yet, although key informants within this case were eager to cooperate and provide access to the research site, this cooperation tended to have a limited character in terms of time-span. On the other hand, certain potential informants in this case study who were contacted individually (with no access provided by the key informants) rejected participation or did not respond to interview requests. Still, this is not considered as an under-representation of participants in the GFP case study since 17 participants, 15 individual interviews and one group interview of 3 participants was sufficient to build the case as those interviewed provided meaningful contributions and different perspectives about the issues studied (Amis, 2005). In addition, this case was enriched by the considerable quantity of primary and secondary documentary sources. Moreover, it could be perceived that the third and fourth groups

of informants were also under-represented. However, policy and contextual investigation relied more on direct investigation of the documentary materials, while the accounts of the informants served the purpose of complementing the above sources and probing their opinions about particular policy and contextual issues. In addition, saturation of new issues of interest was quickly achieved with these two groups of participants, which permitted the cessation of further selection. Finally, the most represented group of participants was that encompassed by the *emerging* sport case study, which was characterised by the highest response rate and enthusiasm for continuous collaboration and assistance.

In terms of the field research site, the majority of individual and group interviews were held in Belgrade, Serbia as the participants within the selected sample either resided or worked there or would regularly visit Belgrade, which enabled a degree of efficiency in approaching the research site, as the researcher is also a permanent resident of Belgrade. A number of interviews were, however, conducted in Stara Pazova, a town in AVP, in the House of Football of the Serbian Football Association, a newly built complex aimed at providing facilities for training, seminars, workshops and other activities related to football development, where the meetings with a number of GFP officials took place during a two day FIFA seminar on grassroots football coaching. The researcher was invited to the seminar by the key informant of the GFP case study in order to meet programme coordinators in charge of implementing the programme locally throughout Serbia. This was a rewarding opportunity from the perspectives of time management and sample representativeness as it provided the researcher with access to participants in charge of programme delivery in Serbian local communities over a two day time period. Besides, the researcher had the opportunity to visit the town of Leskovac, in southern Serbia, where the development of rugby league is significant. One of the key informants in the rugby league case study arranged the researcher's visit during a junior rugby league tournament in January 2013. During the visit, two interviews were held with the local rugby league coach and senior player while the occasion was also used for direct observation of this particular research site. In addition, two interviews were held in Nova Pazova and Pančevo, towns in the AVP with rugby league informants—the second group of research participants.

Research Ethics

Prior to commencing fieldwork, full ethical clearance was sought from the University of Central Lancashire BuSH Ethics Committee on 5 September 2012. Thus, ethical

guidelines were strictly adhered to in all phases of the research process and thereafter. This included those set out by the University of Central Lancashire Ethical Principles (2012) and University Code of Conduct for Research, but also by a body of literature addressing issues of research ethics in qualitative methodological approaches (e.g. Amis, 2005; Gibbs, 2007; Kvale, 2007; Stake, 1995) that presume the role of ethics in research as a minimiser of harm or cost and a maximiser of benefit from the research (Gibbs, 2007).

Thus, prior to commencing the interviews, potential informants were approached by email, which consisted of an official invitation letter and a project information sheet (see Appendix 3). Yet, in some cases the key informants directly suggested a potential participant to be interviewed or provided the researcher with the telephone contact details of a potential informant, hence, the procedural step of initial contact via email was omitted. These situations mainly occurred during the researcher's visit to the FIFA seminar for GFP coordinators in Stara Pazova in October 2012. In this situation, the informants were approached directly with an information sheet to read and to help them to decide on participation in the research. In addition, research participants were provided with a Serbian translation of the project information sheet and informed consent form.

Furthermore, before commencing interviews, informed consent to participate in the research was obtained from participants (see Appendix 3). This was used to confirm an individual's understanding of what they were being asked to do, and to provide 'authorisation for information to be collected in a manner that is neither coercive nor deceitful, thus protecting her/his autonomy' (Amis, 2005: 114). Simultaneously, informants were provided with the project information sheet in hardcopy so as to be able to grasp the main objectives of the research project, follow-up procedures, how the results of the study will be used and their role and rights in the research process. Although interviews as a data collection method do not pose a significant threat of harm, interviewers can put their respondents in a vulnerable position, and thus do have an obligation to follow the ethical procedures prescribed by their institutions (Amis, 2005). Hence, following the above stated ethical principles, the interview procedure was explained to interviewees in detail and interviewees were assured of the following rights: 1) the right to anonymity and confidentiality in the treatment of information; 2) the right not to be audio-recorded without permission; 3) the right not to answer any question; 4) the right to withdraw interview data from the study within two weeks from

the date of the interview; 5) the right to access the interview transcript; 6) the right to be debriefed about the study's findings. Likewise, participants were informed that the information provided would be used only for academic research purposes—this particular study, research conferences and publication in peer-reviewed journals.

As a result, all informants agreed for their interviews to be recorded and transcribed but, had they refused, notes would have been taken as an alternative. Moreover, they all agreed to be quoted according to the principles of anonymity and confidentiality, and allowed the quotes to be used in this study, at academic conferences and in relevant academic publications. Also, none of the interviewees chose to withdraw from the study. The anonymity and confidentiality of data code of conduct used in this research were fully in line with University of Central Lancashire Ethical Principles (2012), which suggests that 'all information collected about a participant during an investigation is confidential unless otherwise agreed in advance [...] [while] data on the human participants should be coded or fully anonymised' (2012: 5). Hence, the names of the participants have not been revealed in this thesis, while codes have been used in this study, conference presentations and will be used in future publications so as to abide to the principle of anonymity and confidentiality. Informants have been delegated a code consisting of three or four defining sub-codes depending on the form of the interview process. Hence, the first sub-code marks the form of participation—individual interview or group interview (I or GI). The second sub-code signifies one of the four groups participants were selected from (marked 1 to 4), while the third sub-code indicates a randomly designated interview number—as the interviews were transcribed they were delegated a number that does not conform to the chronology of the conducted interviews. Thus, in total, the third sub-code is equal to the total number of interviews conducted in a particular participants' group. In addition, group interview (or focus group) participants were delegated a fourth sub-code, a randomly taken number, which signifies a particular participant in a particular group interview. For instance, the applied principle of anonymity through coding participant data was as follows:

- I1.4 – a respondent who participated in the *interview* from the *first group of informants* whose interview was *transcribed fourth in line*; or
- GI2.2.1 – a respondent who participated in a *group interview* belonging to the *second group of informants*, whose focus group was *transcribed second*, and who was randomly delegated number 1 out of the total number of participants in the focus group.

Therefore, confidentiality and anonymity in research imply that private data identifying the subjects are not reported (Kvale, 2007). Although these ethical principles were fully followed in this research, it is still worth noting that issues of anonymity and thus confidentiality were not adhered to without ethical and scientific dilemmas. Namely, during the course of the fieldwork, the majority of informants were clearly indifferent towards the issue of anonymity and confidentiality. Although informed consent that addresses issues of anonymity was signed and agreed upon, the informants often indicated that they speak openly for themselves, thus the decision to be named or not in the research was not of any concern to them. Furthermore, this fact raises questions of the researcher's integrity—the relationship established between the informant and researcher that reflects mutual trust and reciprocity and is embedded in research practice (Gibbs, 2007: 101). As stipulated by Kvale, the importance of a researcher's integrity in interviews is magnified by the fact that the interviewer is the main instrument for obtaining new knowledge (2007: 29), whose values, biographies, and interests are reflected in the research itself. These principles were continuously tracked during the different stages of the research process.

Besides, the entire research process was continuously underpinned by the intersection between the concepts of *reflexivity* and *detachment* from the research data and research subjects, both having ethical and methodological relevance for this research. Firstly, it is assumed that the research process inevitably reflects the socio-historical locations, socio-cultural background and political predilections of the researcher (Gibbs, 2007; Spaaij, 2011). In a similar vein, Gibbs argues that reflexivity relates to the denial of the idea of pure objectivity of a qualitative social research because the researcher, and the product of research, cannot be isolated from the worlds he/she is embedded in (2007). This element in the research is of particular consideration here as it offers an important corrective to micro and macro de-contextualised generalisation about the social role of sport (Spaaij, 2011: 5). Secondly, the concept of *detachment* from the research objects and thereafter the research results, so as to operationalise neutrality, hence the degree of objectivity in the analysis and interpretation of research results, was considered in order to recognise the level of involvement and the ability to distance interpretation from the embedded values and contexts of the researcher. Thus, the capacity for detachment requires an inclination toward reflexivity (Srinivas, 2005). In fact, complementary use of both orientations, if kept in balance, has the capacity to discipline the critically engaged position of a researcher throughout the entire research process (Spaaij, 2011).

This research reflected upon the stated orientations throughout different stages of the research process.

Finally, it is worth noting that institutional ethical procedures to be complied before the commencement of fieldwork are not themselves without issues. In other words, the issue of sensitivity to local contexts, which should be incorporated in research subjects approaching strategies is overlooked by the relevant institutional ethical principles and procedures, thus from the evaluations of the research student ethical proposals to be approved by the relevant Ethics Committees. This issue may affect the ways research is designed and operationalised, which in turn may interfere with the research results. Therefore, flexibility, which accounts for differing research contexts should be incorporated within the above procedures so as to be impartial in relation to the research results. For instance, in designing a project information sheet, email invitation letter and informed consent form, later submitted to the relevant Ethical Committee of the University of Central Lancashire, the researcher accounted for the specific local context in approaching potential research participants, which took into account the strict technical description of the purpose of the invitation characterised by the official language of correspondence. However, this approach was evaluated as complex and suggested to be revised. Moreover, an issue with regard to evaluation of the design of the interview schedule seems to be worth touching upon. Common practice involves detailed ethical evaluation of the interview schedule, which is by the very nature of field research a flexible category, often involving 'on-the-spot decisions about following-up unanticipated leads from the subjects with questions that cannot be determined in advance' (Kvale, 2007: 25). Albeit indispensible, an ethical review of interview themes and questions should strive not to restrict flexibility in a researchers decision-making, while probing for answers in the vastly defined thematic scope. In the case of this study, the interview schedule accounted for a vast array of questions related to the research objectives and the nature of the study, however, not all participants were asked all of the indicated questions. It was up to the researcher to estimate a participant's familiarity with the proposed subjects of enquiry and decide which sections were suitable. Thus, incorporation of the principle of flexibility, whilst comprehensively accounting for the relevant questions and themes in designing the interview schedule was performed.

Semi-Structured Individual Interviews

The interviews conducted were semi-structured in nature as this thesis looked for copious answers with an interest in the informant's standpoint (Bryman, 2001). Gillham discusses how semi-structured interviews represent 'the most important way of conducting a research interview because of its flexibility balanced by structure, and the quality of the data so obtained' (2005: 70). Moreover, the data collection design for this study was informed by the strengths of semi-structured interviewing to 'facilitate a strong element of discovery, while its structured focus allows an analysis in terms of commonalities' (Gillham, 2005: 72). The interview schedule was divided into 8 to 11 different themes depending on the group the interviewed participant belonged to (see Appendix 3). The interview schedule was, thus, tailored to address specific issues of interest for this study, taking into consideration the affiliation of the participant, while incorporating the theoretical propositions of this study. Furthermore, the interview schedule was broadly developed to fit the following thematic scopes: 1) the process of sport development; 2) community development through specific sports actions addressing reciprocal engagement with and in the community; 3) the mechanisms of the development of socially cohesive processes; 4) multilevel networking practices developed within and through the cases in question; 5) developed trust and norms of reciprocity; 6) the role of context; 7) the role of the state in sport development matters and inter-relational practices established between the state and relevant sports bodies; and 8) the role of sports policy in matters of sport development. Yet, the above thematic groups were either further sub-divided or synthesised in order to be adjusted to the particular interview setting. Preparing an interview schedule allowed for tracking the interview thematic structure, combined with on-site flexibility to change the order of the envisaged interview topics when considered necessary, in order to facilitate the flow of the discussion. Also, questions that fell outside the interview schedule were asked in order to fit the specific interview situations and the progression of the interview, or to allow new themes to emerge from the interview process (Pope, 2010). Thus, semi-structured interviews permitted the freedom to pose new questions when needed. Likewise, the open-ended questions allowed participants the freedom to reflect on how they comprehend and view the relevant social worlds (Amis, 2005: 108). Finally, the interview schedule was designed in order to fit interviews of approximately one hour in length. Although this was rightly estimated for the majority of interviews, the actual duration of interviews ranged from 16 minutes to 178 minutes (or nearly 3 hours) that were held at a public place of the informants' choice and chosen during the initial

correspondence while taking into account personal safety issues. The total and average interview duration is shown in Appendix 3.

Particular care was taken to conduct interviews in as neutral a way as possible, in order to enable interviewees to express their own opinions. Still, holding an interview in a neutral way did not undermine the ability of the researcher to establish a reciprocal and trustworthy rapport with the participants, always trying to convey empathy and understanding (Amis, 2005: 123). Whilst the degree of complexity of the questions increased as the conversation progressed, the method for facilitating conversation was to ask 'ice-breaking' questions in order to make the interview situation more flexible and pleasant for the interviewees (Pope, 2010). Thus, various factors indicated in the literature that could affect the quality of data collected were taken into consideration, including the level of active participation by the researcher comprising of effective listening and effective attentiveness (physical position during interviewing, eye-contact and posture) (ibid.). In the same manner, interrupting participants was avoided unless the interview was going considerably 'off-track', and as Amis (2005) cites Fontana and Frey (1994), the principle of encouragement, not evaluation of responses was followed.

Semi-Structured Group Interviews

Albeit not initially planned, group interviews (or focus groups) were held in order to complement individual interviews, (Spaaij, 2011) in situations when certain stakeholders were not able to meet separately. During the data collection process, the researcher was led by the principle of flexibility to adjust to the fieldwork setting so as to be able to benefit from the offered opportunities to collect additional data while reflecting on in-group, inter-relational processes. Thus, as suggested by Gaskell (2000), once they occurred, the objective of the group interviews was to stimulate the participants to talk and to respond to each other within the frame of the selected research themes. In that respect, the role of the researcher was to facilitate conversational flow during the interview, while structurally addressing all relevant research topics. Likewise, the role of the researcher was to encourage those who were hesitant about making a contribution, while managing those who strove to dominate the conversation (Gillham, 2005: 66). Hence, the approach to group interviews reflected the strategy developed for individual interviews additionally involving the exploration of the aspect of in-group social dynamics. Thereby, group interviews enriched the data collected by providing the researcher with new insights and understanding that emerged

from this particular form of data collection (Amis, 2005; Gaskell, 2000) and aimed at bringing forth different viewpoints on an issue (Kvale, 2007: 72).

Group interviewing incorporated participants from the same group or more specifically from the same sub-group within the relevant group sample. Namely, as suggested above, in some cases participants already interviewed suggested a particular group of potential interviewees to take part in the research. From an organisational point of view, as key informants could not assist in providing separate access to particular participants, it was suggested to organise group interviews. These situations occurred in three separate instances—two within rugby league and one within the GFP case study. Of notable significance for this study, however, was the group interview held with seven rugby league pioneers (and veterans) to whom access was provided by the key informant within this particular sub-group. Considering the age cohort of this sub-group (76 to 81) and the researcher's limited access to the individuals within the group by email or even telephone, the research benefitted from the active assistance of a rugby league veteran who was enthusiastic to provide help in organising an interview with this particular group of respondents—i.e. rugby league players that were active during the early development of rugby league in Serbia. This is not surprising, as the social history of rugby league development in Serbia had never before been documented. In addition, while the group interviews provided the researcher with valuable insight into the research topics, significant additional research data in the form of different documentation was collected from the participants on the same occasions, which contributed to the variety of data collected.

4.4.3 Direct Observation

Although interviews were the primary data collection method employed, occasional visits to research sites offered the opportunity for direct observation of some aspects of emerging and established sports case studies, which complemented the dominant method within the multi-method research approach (Gillham, 2010). Hence, direct observation as a method was featured in a more *ad hoc*, time-limited manner as occasions for this type of research method could not been planned systematically in advance, but were instead dependent on the specific events the researcher had the chance to observe. Correspondingly, in some situations observation enabled the researcher 'to obtain impressionistic information concerning sports activities and participants' engagement with these activities' (Spaaij, 2011: 10). These opportunities

were used to observe what people do and say, and how they interact in a particular setting (Coalter, 2008; Gillham, 2010). Still, as has been already mentioned, this method was employed to converge with evidence obtained by exerting other methodological techniques. In addition, the research was informed by Eisenhardt's approach to the flexibility of different methods used in case study research (1989), which presumes that if a new data collection opportunity arises during the research, it is reasonable to take advantage of it by amending or complementing data collection with suitable methods. Still, as she advocates, this does not mean being unstructured in data collection, rather this flexibility is controlled opportunism in which researchers take advantage of the uniqueness of a specific case so as to bolster research results (Eisenhardt, 1989: 539).

Direct observations were made at sports events, seminars and during travel to a rugby league tournament in southern Serbia with representatives of the Rugby League Federation of Serbia—coaches and players (see Appendix 3). During the field visits the researcher was always heedful of how to minimise the effect of her presence in the field while observing particular activities (Kalof et al., 2008). Furthermore, although the general form of this technique relied more on observation than participation, in certain cases informal conversation with some of the key informants and other participants spontaneously occurred, which may be considered a form of unstructured participatory activity by the researcher. Yet, given the informality of this approach, interviews were not recorded or transcribed, while notes were taken after the completion of the field visit. Therefore, during the course of the fieldwork, notes were taken and maintained immediately after the visit to a particular site. In line with Gillham's suggestion, field notes included a description of the events observed and informal conversations held, ideas and personal impressions, or things to check up or find out about later (2010: 60).

Direct observation along with unstructured participation in the form of informal interviews allowed for an insight into the nature of the relevant sports activities, social interaction between participants, values, norms and principles employed during the activities while, on the other hand it, in some instances, supplemented or validated evidence obtained by the employment of other methodological strategies.

4.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis commenced during the early stage of the fieldwork and continued along with the transcription of individual and group interviews, while field notes were typed up as to systematise fieldwork observational impressions. Albeit considerably time consuming, transcription of the interviews allowed the researcher to get to know the data in detail while simultaneously performing analysis of the data. Thus, as suggested by Denzin (1970), cited in Lee and Fielding (2004), qualitative research is characterised by a fluid interactive relationship between data collection and data analysis.

The strategy to analyse transcribed interviews, observational notes and relevant documents collected did not rely on computer-based tools to manage the collected data. While at the beginning of the data collection process, the researcher had taken into consideration a variety of computer-assisted tools to manage the data, such as NVivo, ATLAS.ti and Dedoose—often labelled as 'theory-building software' (Pope, 2010)— that emphasise relationships between the codes and categories and support code and retrieval work with data (Lee and Fielding, 2004), due to the number of issues concerned with the use of these types of software, it was decided that data analysis would be performed using a word processor. In addition, the fact that the use of computer-assisted tools for data analysis may affect detachment from the data, decrease flexibility in data management, may jeopardise data security and may divorce data from the context (ibid.), led the researcher to resolve the issue by using a word processor supported by excel processor and a 'paper-based' data analysis approach.

Accordingly, the analysis of data was streamlined by the thematic areas covered within the interview schedule, which complied with the study's conceptual framework or theoretical propositions (Yin, 2009) that the researcher designed prior to entering the field. The propositions included in the interview schedule helped to organise the entire case studies analysis and to 'define alternative explanations to be examined' (Yin, 2009: 130-131). Although conceptually structured, predefined thematic areas within the interview schedule did not restrict the emergence of codes, categories or themes from the data, but rather served as a base from which to further conceptual categorisation. Hence, after the interviews were transcribed they were broken up into the respective number of themes covered by the interview schedule. While from this point on the data was further analysed in order to be assigned different codes within the frame of the predefined topic areas, the analysis strategy abided to a non-restrictive or flexible

approach to identify concepts and themes not covered by the interview schedule but which may be of prominence as a research result. Therefore, the coding strategy was led by a 'concept-driven coding' approach while allowing for 'data-driven' codes to emerge from the analysis so as to enable new concepts to be contrived (Gibbs, 2007). As Gibbs further acknowledges these two concepts of data analysis are not exclusive (2007: 46) as this study demonstrates.

The process of coding further comprised the selection of lower-level concepts and then grouping them together into higher-level concepts, which represented a particular phenomenon or theme (Pope, 2010). Technically, the concepts of the lower level were understood here as *repeating ideas* expressed in the relevant text by different research participants (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). In this vein, higher-level concepts are labelled as themes that indicate a group of lower-level concepts or repeating ideas, included or pointed to within a particular theme (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Such data analysis protocol was informed by a constant data comparison strategy, which encompassed comparing for differences and similarities between incidents and/or repeating ideas, in order to classify the data into higher-level descriptive concepts or themes. According to Corbin and Strauss this type of comparison is essential as it allows the researcher to differentiate themes or categories and to locate properties and dimensions specific to a particular theme or category (2008). Still, the role of constant comparison is not only to be used to develop theory and explanations, but also to increase the richness of the description in the analysis and to ensure that it closely captures what people have said (Gibbs, 2007: 96). In addition, during the analysis process labelling, selection, memos, and notes were written which reflected the lines of thought that emerged during data analysis and the strategies employed in deriving and grouping concepts (Blaxter et al., 2010). In the majority of cases, each concept was delegated a separate memo or note (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Consequently, the emergent themes were separated into different Word files, which after further analysis and refinement were grouped into theoretical constructs consistent with the conceptual framework of the study and were subsequently used in writing up the research results.

In summary, the methods applied in this research were designed to collect and analyse qualitative data in a triangulated fashion, incorporating the prior development of the theoretical propositions to guide the data collection and analysis in a non-restrictive manner (Yin, 2009). Thus, a combination of methods, sources and analytical strategies

were used, which enabled the production of new knowledge embedded in the research results of this thesis.

4.6 Limits of the Thesis

4.6.1 On Language

As the researcher is a native speaker of Serbian and the fieldwork for this research was conducted in Serbia, the majority of the primary data collected was in Serbian with the exception of two interviews—one held in English while another was held interchangeably in English and in Serbian as the participant was a British citizen based in Belgrade with Serbian language proficiency. Furthermore, the interview schedule, informant consent form and invitation letter initially made in English were translated into Serbian because it enabled the researcher to discuss the concepts in question more fluently without needing to interpret English on the spot. Interview transcription was done in Serbian while citations used in the thesis were translated into English. Thus, the researcher operated intermittently with both languages during the data collection, analysis and reporting stages of the research. This practice comprises of gaining comparability of meanings between languages facilitated by the researcher and includes a broader understanding of a particular cultural and social setting (Birbili, 2000). During the course of this research the researcher was always questioning language and cultural compatibilities and incompatibilities and strived to interpret the data taking these constraints into account (in some cases). The strategy of translation and interpretation of the data from Serbian to English included a dual approach, which encompassed 'literal' translation in combination with 'free' translation in cases of incompliance of grammatical and/or phrasal structures between languages used in the study. The rationale for using both translation principles relates first to the reliability and transparency of the presented data while, on the other hand, it reflects the principle of the 'readability' of the presented data in cases when the literal translation of phrasal and grammatical structures would prevent it. Additionally, during the translation process, the researcher was always alert to the risks of misinterpretation and losing the meaning and information when the 'free' translation method was applied.

Finally, limitations posed by the use of different languages during the course of research are further associated with the use of conceptual terminology and its meaning across the languages used in the study—how certain conceptual terms in English are translated and

adjusted to the local language and its context. This is particularly relevant for the translation and meanings of concepts relating to *socially cohesive* processes. It was clear from the beginning of the fieldwork that much of the effort would be placed in the clarification of these concepts throughout the interview schedule and consequently through interview discussions because comprehension of the above stated terms differs in both languages, which is connected to their use within the different social, cultural and political traditions and contexts. Therefore, Serbian comprehension of the concept of *social cohesion* for instance, relies to a great extent on the communist and socialist political, social and cultural traditions and in many instances (which is reflected in the interviews as well) their meaning is equated with the former 'Yugoslav' concepts of 'brotherhood and unity' (Gordy, 2013: 38), 'solidarity' and/or 'togetherness'. Evidently, the notion of this concept within western traditions, as discussed in previous chapters, is more complex. Still, with the emergence of Serbia's EU accession process the above concepts gained a somewhat greater prominence and comprehension, yet shaped by the particular Serbian contextual traditions, but often excluding the purposiveness of social cohesion as beneficial to the achievement of particular common aims. In a similar vein, while the term *trust* for example stands up well to literal translation, culturally it was a sensitive question. Although *all* respondents discussed the issue of trust, the researcher's impression was that respondents felt discussion about trust to be 'intimate'. Thus, the task of the researcher was fourfold: 1) to interpret the meanings of particular concepts imposed on respondents (i.e. originating from a foreign contextual settings), 2) to understand their comprehension of particular concepts and terms (within the traditions of their own cultural and social contextual setting), 3) to relate respondents' comprehension of the concepts with the local context, and finally 4) to relate back the respondents' understanding of research concepts to the original understanding of these concepts as presented in this thesis. Although the above presented research circumstances may cause some issues, collecting data in one language and presenting the results in another has become increasingly common practice in social sciences research (Birbili, 2000).

4.6.2 Methodological Limitations

Some of the methods employed in this study may seem scarce in scope, thus in the production of primary data. This is particularly relevant for the group interviews conducted and observational methods used. Namely, as was shown earlier in this chapter, only three focus groups were held while the participants' observations were

time-limited and often had an *ad hoc* character. This was mainly due to previously enacted research design, which involved individual interviews as a main methodological strategy in data collection. Still, the design was flexible enough to incorporate additional research methods so as to enable the comprehensive triangulation of the collected data. Thus, the above methods were supplementary to interviewing as the core method for this thesis, which may contribute to justifying their limited character in fieldwork application. In addition, the scope of the observational research was affected by resource constraints—travel costs and time available to visit research sites that were of interest. The employment of this method consequently impacted the volume of observational research and data collected.

Moreover, the researcher encountered constraints on access to documentary sources relating to the GFP case study. Although, official access to programme documents from the Football Association of Serbia, in relation to the GFP, for the purpose of this research, was granted (in writing) in practice access was limited. After several attempts to access particular documents, the researcher was provided with a restricted scope of documentary resources. Still, during the interview phase with the particular key informants within this study, some of the information from requested documents was provided.

Finally, as it was previously noted, methodological considerations in light of these limitations may be understood through selection criteria of certain programmes and projects to be explored within the GFP case study. Namely, although it would be highly beneficial to comprehensively investigate the GFP from a social capital perspective, given its programmatic scope that includes a vast array of football development aspects, it was decided that the research would be limited to the development of children's and youth football for the regular and deprived population categories. This imposed limitation relates to the assumption that the development of children's football is a milestone for the development of football in general, including its potential to instigate bottom-up development of positive social values and football culture in Serbia (Hughson, 2012). Lastly, besides the above rationale to limit the study of particular programmes and projects, time and funding factors had a stake in limiting the sample selection of programmes for this case. This study has been supported by the University of Central Lancashire International Student Scholarship for full-time researchers, which covers the International tuition fee rate for the first three years of study, excluding living costs and relevant fieldwork expenses.

4.6.3 General Limitations

Within the frame of general research limitations, time-frame restrictions in researching historical and contemporary events as well as spatial limitations are included. Firstly, the study was restricted by a particular time-frame in terms of data collection. For instance, it does not explore sports policy with regard to social capital after 2013 nor does it on the other hand explore the relevant activities within the established and emerging sports case studies. This limitation is imposed from time-management and organisational perspectives, as indefinite collection of data would affect timely data analysis and submission of the thesis. In a similar manner, although a brief social history of rugby league development has been encompassed by this research, the focus was placed on the contemporary development of this sport. The particular orientation to study the social history of rugby league in Serbia would require extensive archival research, which would make for a separate study in itself.

Secondly, the research was geographically limited. The fieldwork was in the great majority of cases conducted in Belgrade, Serbia as stated earlier, although it investigated prospects for 'positive futures for Serbian sport'. This particular research situation may seem to affect the sample selection of participants, thus having some methodological implications for the representativeness of the samples. Still, considering the various factors at stake that guided the spatial scope of the fieldwork, such as time-frame restrictions and the modest financial resources available, it was rational to decide to base fieldwork in Belgrade. This decision was reinforced by the fact that the core of respondents relevant for the study resided or worked in the Serbian capital.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has expounded the methodological orientation of this study and the associated data collection and data analysis methods. In short, the research orientation and research methods employed were selected because of the nature of the knowledge this study attempted to yield. Thus, building upon the research objectives and consequently the research questions, it adopted a qualitative investigation approach to examine contextually-shaped lived experiences, processes and meanings (Spaaij, 2011) in the creation of the selected sports social capital models, while further examining the potential of these models to impart social benefits for the Serbian population through social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation. More specifically, the

study employs a qualitative, multiple-case methodological approach, involving the research of convergences between *emerging* and *established* sports, in light of social capital creation and associated outcomes, including the investigation of Serbian pro-social sports policy discourse. With the aim to reflect upon lived experiences in certain contextual settings, the primary data collection method relied on here was semi-structured, individual and group interviews, triangulated with a review of documentary sources and direct observation, accompanied with principles of *reflexivity* and *detachment* in performing qualitative research, which, if kept in balance, may foster the critical engagement of a researcher during the course of the research process (Spaaij, 2011).

Ethically commissioned, semi-structured interviews enabled the systematic analysis of the data collected as the interview schedule was thematically oriented in order to comply with the theoretical propositions—and, thus, the conceptual framework—developed for this thesis. This approach led to a viable system of coding consistent with the grouping of lower-level concepts into higher-level concepts that represent specific thematic areas. The research analysis strategy has not been restricted to a predefined thematic scope (by the interview schedule) but rather it reflected a non-restrictive, flexible approach to identifying emergent concepts and themes. Hence, the analysis of data intermittently employed 'concept-driven' and 'data-driven' coding, which best suit this study.

Finally, acknowledgement of the research limitations including language, methodological limitations and more general limitations, may facilitate understanding of the entire research context and the processes involved in its modelling and delivery. On that note, one may consider, for instance, language as limiting the effective pursuit of research. This entire research is bilingual. English and Serbian were intermittently utilised over the course of the research. Although, issues with translation and interpretation of data in such a setting may occur, the task of the researcher is to conceptually and contextually facilitate the participants' comprehension of the research concepts (originally emerging from a foreign language context and tradition) and to link them back to the original theoretical or conceptual notions of the inspected themes so as to yield reliable interpretations. Additionally, limitations that resulted from decisions relating to the research project's time-management and cost-management constraints involved moderate spatial limitations in conducting fieldwork, while staging the use of particular research methods comprised balancing on the method's significance axis

between the key methodological principles for the cases selected, including the nature of the research project in general. The next four chapters will examine the research findings in detail.

CHAPTER 5. The Developmental Context for Established and Emerging Sports in Serbia

5.1 Introduction

Building upon the discussion of the Serbian sports context and its developmental traits from Chapter 3, in its determination to answer the first research question of this thesis, this chapter examines the contextual backgrounds of the selected *established* and *emerging* sports in order to show how these sports activities were developing and being organised in the particular social and sporting setting.

Although residing at opposite ends of the developmental continuum, characterised by different organisational and programmatic aims, the researched cases both have a strong developmental component that bounds them in a specific social context. Thus, before proceeding to an in-depth analysis of the cases within the study's conceptual framework, it is necessary to analyse the micro and meso context of the evolutionary nature of these sports in Serbia, in order to underpin discussion in subsequent chapters. As such the present chapter is a specific contextual prelude to the central discussion of the thesis developed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. This chapter, hence, firstly investigates the background and context of GFP development while discussing its sport development and development through sport components. It turns then to an analysis of rugby league's developmental architecture in Serbia in two distinct stages portraying its genesis, rooted in strong practices of community engagement.

5.2 Grassroots Football in Serbia: Sport Development and Development through Sport

Football has been the world's most popular sport, ever since the late nineteenth century and its international diffusion by the British, spanning culturally diverse societies on all continents (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004: 545). From the span of its global popularity, interest in the meaning of its social, cultural, political and power relations impact and the ways it engages and interacts with the community are increasingly manifested throughout contemporary public and scholarly debates. These debates have, however, mostly focused on its capacity to inspire social disorder (most notably in the form of football hooliganism) or to advance highly politicised forms of national

expression (Brentin, 2013; Hough, 2008). But comprehensive debate about football's social, political, and cultural meanings in a particular context should involve (and, as of recently, often does) the practice of 'positive seeding' of football in the community— i.e. discussion about its development at the grassroots level, and the ways it alters quantitative and qualitative trends in the game's comprehensive development while interacting with the community for positive cultural and social change. In this way, focusing on the Serbian contextual landscape, this study begins to unpack football's developmental potential by investigation of its features at the grassroots levels (see Appendix 5 for a brief history of football's development in Serbia).

The development of grassroots football in Serbia has a history as long as the development of the game itself. Institutionally structured development of grassroots football has, however, been embarked upon only recently. The periods before the institutional structuralisation of grassroots football in Serbia may be delineated as a) unstructured development outside clubs and schools (practiced during the initial years of the introduction of football in Serbia at the beginning of the twentieth century); b) development of grassroots football within clubs (after the establishment and increasing development of football clubs across Serbia and Yugoslavia); and c) development of football sections within primary and secondary schools in Serbia (and Yugoslavia) notably after WWII (see Appendix 5). Hence, institutionally, it was not structured within the Football Association of Serbia (and Yugoslavia), but rather relied on the responsibility of the clubs and school system to invest in the development of youth and children's football.

The need to regulate football development at the grassroots level emerged after continuous football de-developmental trends in the aftermath of the disintegration of the (former) Yugoslav sports system. In addition to continuously poor results at national and international competitions, grassroots level football at the club level and in schools and universities, suffered from decreasing quality and low participation rates (I4.3). Likewise, institutional appeals within the football organisation indicated that football at the grassroots level needed to be organisationally embedded within the national Football Association (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2001). The *1997-2001 Report of the Football Association of Serbia*[6] (Izveštaj o radu Fudbalskog Saveza Srbije za mandatni period

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[6] The Football Association of Serbia was a member of the Football Association of Yugoslavia and later the Football Association of Serbia and Montenegro (from 2003 to February 2007). After the 2006 dissolution of the Serbia and Montenegro confederation, the successor to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, each republic's football association received national federation status.

1997/2001. godine) delineated that during the reporting period football organisation did not have the capacity to deal with the development of football at the grassroots level, as it was developing spontaneously outside the football organisation (ibid.). Yet, the significance of the role of primary schools was recognised as decisive for the development of children's football, while simultaneously impacting an increase of mass participation in this sport. Therefore, as stated in the *Report*, although 'the school represents a milestone of the football organisation in Serbia', the football organisation did not fully support the role of the school in football development, failing to establish constructive mechanisms of cooperation that would better impact its development at the grassroots level. Nevertheless, the *Report* comments that instead of exclusively focusing on activities related to the national team and international cooperation, the Football Association of Yugoslavia (FAY) should prioritise the enactment of a football development strategy, including grassroots football, so as to secure positive developmental ends for football, grounded in the (re)establishment of inclusive networking practices for all actors within the national football organisation (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2001).

Even though the appeals for the systematised organisation and strategic development of grassroots football were long heralded by football professionals, structured meso-level governance of grassroots football within the Football Association of Serbia (FAS), started only in 2009, initiated by the Union of European Football Associations' (UEFA) Grassroots Charter established in 2004 (I1.4; I1.5). Hence, although the establishment of the Grassroots Football Department within the FAS was decided upon in 2007, UEFA provided the decisive impetus for practical operationalisation of the grassroots football development idea within the FAS (I1.4). The role of UEFA is, thus, to provide a guiding framework for member associations in reinforcing grassroots programmes, while signing the UEFA's Grassroots Charter declares that the minimum criteria in grassroots football development have been fulfilled (UEFA, 2011). Still, as it was indicated during the research interviews, signing the Charter does not mean that a national grassroots programme should develop strictly in line with UEFA's grassroots philosophy, rather it should follow UEFA's key principles on grassroots development, adapted to the particular social context at the national level (I1.4; I1.5). In connection to this, according to the FAS's Statute, Article 22, grassroots football in Serbia is defined as follows:

> Grassroots football is non-elite and non-professional football that includes different
> variations of the game of football, pitch dimensions, level of proficiency, gender and

age groups of the players of different races, nationalities, and religious orientation. Grassroots football includes children's football, youth football, amateur football, football for women, veteran football, football for deprived population categories, and others. It promotes the educational function of sport, fair play, understanding, tolerance and responsibility through sport. The main premise of grassroots football is mass participation [...]. (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2012a)

Therefore, the aim of the GFP in Serbia is to increase the football base, to promote, protect and develop football and communities through football. The programme was designed so as to generate a wide range of positive sport and social development processes. There is, however, a significant lack of research backing up claims of the developmental and social outcomes of this programme. This lacuna may have roots in the programme's development infancy, which firmly relates to the fragile organisational capacity and underdeveloped outreach practices in Serbia.

The level of the national grassroots programme development is subject to UEFA's evaluation that set seven-star evaluation principles to define the developmental level of the national programmes. According to UEFA, 'the top echelon of the UEFA Grassroots Charter is premier level, for associations with the full complement of seven stars' (2011). On the other hand, at the foundation stage, each national association is awarded one star. The GFP of the FAS is a holder of one star—the basic level of development. Furthermore, as indicated by UEFA, stars as developmental markers, 'are awarded in relation to excellence in specific grassroots areas, such as social projects including disability football, number of participants, nurturing of women's and girls' football, and promotion of the grassroots game' (ibid.).

The issue of the stage of development of the FAS's grassroots football programme that was discussed during the research interviews showed that the initial phase of programme development concerned its administrative, organisational, and policy inception. According to one of the interviewees, at the outset, the organisational structure was defined while 'regulations and decisions that profiled the role of grassroots football have been endorsed along with the idea to gather existing grassroots initiatives within the grassroots programme' (I1.5).

Yet, although officially the programme is in its initial development phase and coping with a large volume of constraints resulting from the lack of recognition of the programme within the FAS, the lack of capacity building endeavours by those implementing the programme, a lack of football infrastructure and, finally, wider constraints resulting from the social, economic and political setting (I1.2; I1.4; I1.5;

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I1.6; I1.8; I1.10; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15), the interview accounts do indicate, however, that it has obviously entered the next phase of development, manifested in increased participation at the grassroots level, including the development of the programme's social components—inclusion through sport for children and youth deprived on the basis of gender, poverty and disability. These issues will be further observed through the social capital prism in the chapters to follow.

Organisationally, the Grassroots Football Department, being under the jurisprudence of the FAS's General Secretary, is responsible for programme development, governance and implementation (see Appendix 6), all regulated by the Statute of the FAS, Article 22:

> […] Grassroots football of the FAS is defined by its programme, plan and calendar of activities submitted by the Grassroots Football Board, and endorsed by the Executive Board of the FAS. FAS grassroots football activities are implemented by a network of coordinators consisting of individuals representing territorial football associations, who are responsible for coordination and implementation of the plan, programmes and calendar of activities of FAS grassroots football. The grassroots programme of the FAS is implemented independently and in cooperation with national and international partners, as defined by partnership contracts and protocols. (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2012a)

Additionally, the Grassroots Football Department closely cooperates with five permanent Commissions dealing with the FAS's separate programmatic dimensions, such as the Women's Football Commission, the Futsal Commission, the Youth Football Commission, the Competition Commission and the Referee's Commission. Moreover, the Grassroots Football Board, which has the status of a permanent FAS's Commission (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2012a), is responsible for programme development, funding proposals and supervision and monitoring of programme implementation.

Territorially, the Grassroots Football Department operates via five regional committees, each encompassing a certain number of county and municipal committees responsible for GFP implementation in local communities. In total, there are 25 county committees operating throughout Serbia. Each committee on a regional and county level delegates a programme coordinator who is in charge of programme implementation at that particular level of operation. Thus, the network of coordinators at different levels constitutes the National Grassroots Football Programme Network—the main structural and organisational governing body responsible for programme implementation. Currently, the Network delivers the programme via one national coordinator, four regional coordinators, 25 county, and 102 municipal coordinators—football educators, who operate on a semi-voluntary basis (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2012b). Furthermore,

the governance structure of the GFP extends to established models of cooperation with relevant partnership projects involved in the GFP's mission in Serbia. In this way the governance structure of the GFP is comprised of the Network of Coordinators, engaged directly by the FAS and also the Network of Partnership Projects, each addressing specific GFP mission objectives.

Moreover, the financial operations of the programme are somewhat blurred. While the GFP's capacity to operate relies on UEFA's and FIFA's annual funds, including FAS financial support to the Network of Coordinators (I1.5), the partnership projects within the programme are funded through grants by international donor agencies as well as the Serbian Ministry of Youth and Sport and local self-governments (I1.3; I1.4; I1.5; I1.1; I1.9; I1.13; GI1.1). As was indicated during the interviews, certain initiatives within the grassroots football programme have, however, been financially supported by the participants' membership fees.[7] But as financial reports and fund allocations of the FAS's Grassroots Football Department, including partnership initiatives, were not available to the researcher, a framework for the financial workings of the programme cannot be fully established. While this situation possibly indicates non-transparent practices in the disposition, allocation and reporting of funds, some of the interview accounts confirm that 'they [the FAS] are aware that [grassroots football] is a source of finances for the entire FAS, and that they also use these funds for purposes other than grassroots football, as is the practice in all associations' (GI1.1.2).

Finally, this study, as was previously indicated, strives to explore mechanisms and processes in social capital creation in children's football as a resource for sport and community development. In this vein, the initiatives inspected within the selected domains of the programme may be classified into the two main groups 1) projects with a dominant *sport development* component, and 2) projects with a dominant *development through sport* (or sport-for-development) component. However, a sharp distinction between the above programmatic orientations cannot be drawn as merging of elements of sport development and development through sport in various proportions is present throughout the distinct initiatives of the programme.

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[7] These projects are the Mini-maxi League and FairPlay League.

5.2.1 Sport Development Initiatives

Development of children's football resides at the core of the developmental principles of grassroots football. As such, the key principle of this segment of the programme is to contribute to football development by adapting the principles of the game to the different physical, psychological, social and age needs and abilities of children involved in the programme. The initiatives dominantly contributing to children's *sport development* inspected within the scope of this study relate to the activities of the 'Mini-maxi League', the 'FairPlay League' and 'My School – My Club' projects.

Although the Mini-maxi League and the FairPlay League belong to different GFP partnership projects, implemented by the partner organisations the Children's Football Association (Dečija fudbalska asocijacija – DFA) and the Children's Fair Play Sport Association (Dečija sportska fer plej asociajacija – DSFA) respectively, they both aim to increase participation in football by engaging children in indoor (Mini-maxi League) and outdoor (FairPlay League) competitions. Participation in competitions is secured for boys and girls aged 4 to 14, selected from various football schools[8] and football clubs across Serbia. As indicated by one of the interviewees, the projects are basically 'a service of the [football] clubs … and are mainly treated as competitions' (I1.2). These two projects are based on mutual exchange and cooperation because they share the same participants (I1.2).

The sport developmental potential of these projects is primarily reflected in mass participation trends. As one of the respondents indicated, 'the Mini-maxi League is one of the most significant projects in grassroots football, continuously gathering together over 10 thousand participants, which has in fact launched a trend of involving young children in sport' (I1.5). Furthermore, these projects are deemed to have wide geographical coverage, operating in 27 towns in the case of the Mini-maxi League (I1.6) and 9 towns across Serbia in the case of the FairPlay League (FairPlay League, 2013). Besides, both projects incorporate particularly defined propositions and rules adapted to the needs of children in sport (FairPlay League, 2013; I1.6). These include the size of the pitch, equal involvement of all participants in competitions, evaluation of

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[8] According to the Article 97 of the *Law on Sport*, sport [football] schools are the organisations founded with the aim to provide sport [football] training and specialisation in the particular sport to third parties […] and as such they cannot have the word 'club' or 'union' in their [official] name (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2011a). Moreover, according to the Article 33 of the same law, the word 'club' may have exclusive sport organisations that are members of the particular sport association (ibid.), such as for example the Football Association of Serbia.

fair play, and mixed-gender teams. Additionally, during the seasonal tournaments, there are no referees, no standings, and no scoring listings except for the final tournaments (I1.6). As interviewee I1.6 indicates, the result is not the motive for participation in the tournaments during the season; it counts only in the final matches at the end of the season. Recognition of the development potential of these initiatives was confirmed by UEFA in 2011 when the Mini-maxi League was awarded third place in the Best Grassroots Project in Europe (I1.6).

Despite the sport development potential of the above initiatives, some of the interviewed respondents felt that these activities rely on the financially driven motives of certain individuals, excluding concerns of sporting and wider community benefits. In that regard, one of the interviewees involved in the FAS's Grassroots Football Network of Coordinators pointed out that he does not approve of the majority of concepts and programmes within the Grassroots Football Department and its Board, and continues:

> […] I'm afraid that we will become the Board for the Mini-maxi League and FairPlay League and those competitions that are commercialised, because in order for their children to participate, parents will have to pay for participation. I think that our mission should be to enable all children, including those whose parents can't pay 3 or 4 thousand (dinars) to play. Because there is selection on the basis of who can and who can't, whose parents have and whose don't … I think this is the basic problem and that this should be the primary role of grassroots football at the FAS. (I1.11)

This sentiment additionally indicates that sport development practices should take into account wider social and economic contexts so as to impact the prosperous advancement in this field.

On the other hand, consideration of the specific macro setting is, to some extent, covered by the FAS's Grassroots Football Department project 'My School – My Club', which aims to bring about a revival of school sports across Serbia by fostering increased participation in school football sections/clubs and investing in sports equipment, so as to influence the sustainable development of this sport in schools. During the interviews the often-heard argument in relation to sport development was that the school is and should remain the cornerstone of grassroots sports development in Serbia. Organisationally, this particular initiative is directly implemented by the Network of Coordinators engaged by the FAS, whose primary task is to coordinate activities with physical education teachers in establishing and running football sections/clubs. In setting up football activities, participation of girls is high on the project agenda—each school should register a minimum of 30 percent of girls in football sections in order to be

included in the project. Consequently, this project adds to the developmental platform of women's football in Serbia, by impacting upon an increase in girls participating in football at the grassroots level (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2013b). Also, all established sections/clubs are required to be registered with the FAS, in order for their work to be monitored.

Yet, the project encounters a number of risks, mainly arising from the wider contexts affecting project implementation and sustainability of activities.

One of the research informants who coordinates the project in Serbia's northern province indicated that:

> […] [t]here is a problem with physical education teachers, who are interested in other sports such as basketball and volleyball […]. Second, those teachers are not interested in this, they aren't motivated … they work only for money and nothing else, here believe me I'm telling you this honestly, I found maybe 22 [teachers] who are willing to work on this on a voluntary basis … unfortunately they are these kind of people, I'm talking about the teachers—this is the problem. Secondly, we don't have the working conditions—we don't have enough space to work. The primary school in my town doesn't have a sports hall… working conditions in schools are very problematic, we don't have equipment, there is huge poverty out there, I must tell this. (I1.15)

Although the pitfall factors have been assessed within the project (I1.5), the field experience of the Network Coordinators shows that context-appropriate governance, planning and sustainable organisational mechanisms should be better incorporated in the project delivery process so as to produce the desired outcomes (I1.15).

5.2.2 Development Through Sport Initiatives

On balance, *development through sport* initiatives of the partnership organisations included under the GFP umbrella, work towards complementing the overarching principles of the grassroots programme—'football for all, regardless of gender, talent, skills, ethnic, social, religious or political background' (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2012b). Or in other words, these principles address the inclusive development of the game that may foster community cohesion at multiple levels. The following initiatives of the partner organisations of the FAS's GFP have been explored within this study: 1) Open Fun Football Schools of the Cross Cultures Project Association, Serbian Branch; 2) Balkan Alpe Adria Project (B.A.A.P.); and 3) the Special Olympics Serbian Charter initiatives.

Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) were first organised in 1998 in communities severely affected by the succession war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The initiative was

designed to bring together children from divided communities through a five-day grassroots football programme striving to contribute to the still fragile reconciliation processes in the Western Balkans (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). Following the above principles, the programme aims to build increased interaction between children from divided communities through developing football skills, teamwork, trusting and reciprocal relations, self-confidence, de-emphasising the competitive aspects of the game (ibid.), while fun is at the heart of the project's pedagogical approach (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 462). Likewise, involving children in the programme engages their parents in inter-community relations, but also the voluntarily participation of local clubs, football associations and municipalities that host the events (ibid.). The initiative is, therefore, set up to nurture community cohesiveness, positive social relations and trust among participants included in the project, whereas the competitive aspects of the game are not in the OFFS's focus (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 462). The project began to operate in Serbia in 2001. From 2001 to 2011, 39,700 boys and girls aged 4 to 12, from various social, ethnic and religious backgrounds, participated in 193 football schools held in Serbia (OFFS, 2011). The project also features a strong educational component for all parties involved. For instance, coaches working with children undergo extensive training on the approach to the game while the children are trained in the principles of conflict resolution (Udsholt and Nicolajsen, 2011). Organisationally, it operates through a network of instructors and school leaders from local communities. As was indicated during the interviews, the network consists of 15 instructors, 30 leaders from selected cities and approximately 1,500 coaches who usually have professional sporting experience (GI1.1.1).

Whilst primarily focusing on developing communities through sport, this project also promotes the sport development agenda by donating football equipment and training equipment to participating stakeholders—football clubs, associations, municipalities, schools—and in this way ensuring a degree of sustainability of football activities at the local community level.

Furthermore, B.A.A.P., as another partnership initiative within the GFP, is designed to organise a number of football events throughout the region of the Western Balkans with the aim of promoting intercultural dialogue, focusing primarily on anti-nationalism, anti-racism, anti-discrimination and anti-violence education initiatives through football in order to increase social interaction and cohesion within certain multi-ethnic communities in the region (I1.1). The mission principles of the project are implemented

through various activities such as 'Balkaniade'—regional youth football tournaments organised throughout the Balkans in cooperation with local, national and international stakeholders; 'Football Unites' workshops that aim to contribute to capacity building for relevant stakeholders in the project; 'FARE Action Week', which tackles issues of racism in sport, and 'Vienna meets Balkan' international fair play youth tournaments organised annually in Vienna, Austria, that includes participants from local migrant communities, ethnic minorities and participants from the Western Balkan states. In addition, it aims to increase networking and exchange of best practices in children's and youth football development among all the delivering parties involved throughout the region of the Western Balkans. Organisationally, the initiative operates via a network of branch offices in the Balkans, including liaison with the FAS's GFP. Critically, however, the impact of this project cannot be fully assessed, as governance, including monitoring and evaluation practices, have not dealt with quantitative and qualitative markers that demonstrate the project's impact, such as the number of participants involved, volunteers and staff engaged and local partners included.

Finally, the Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports, Serbian Branch, specifically addresses development through sport of children and youth with intellectual disabilities. It combines players with and without intellectual disabilities on the same sports team for both training and competition, aiming at enabling athletes (with disabilities) to develop sporting skills and socialise with their peers, develop friendships, integrate and interact with the community through sport (Dowling et al., 2010a). Likewise, community integration of youth with intellectual disabilities is one of the central foci of the Special Olympics initiatives globally and in Serbia (Haas, 2012).

According to Dowling et al., the rate of participation in this programme is increasing with 275 participants—athletes and partners, including 27 coaches—involved within the Unified Sport initiative in Serbia in 2010 (2010b). Participants of the Unified Sports initiative benefit most notably in the domain of increasing socially inclusive experiences through participation in this project (Haas, 2012). Interestingly, the philosophy of the initiative relies on the social capital concept as demonstrated by the programme's documentation.

Moreover, the significance of the initiative has been recognised at multiple levels, including state institutions in charge of sport development. Thus far, sustainability is fostered by institutional support from the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic

of Serbia, which amongst other supporting incentives, such as partnership and promotion, contributes financially to the project's development (I1.3).

Finally, the initiative is implemented on the basis of the delegation of authorities to the sports clubs founded to pursue the Unified Sport objectives:

> We are an umbrella organisation. We have 12 clubs established and two are in the process of registration. We have all sports in our clubs not only football. And all the results we achieve, we report to the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Serbian Sport Union […] and our stakeholders, our athletes are obliged to train three times a week. (I1.3)

Although the outcomes of this initiative are many, it still strives to be recognised at the local level as a system changing initiative in the domain of social inclusion and empowerment for disabled youth and children, with sport as the central gathering ground (I1.3).

In summary, despite various challenges faced from an organisational capacity perspective, as well as the meso and macro context perspective, the GFP's programmatic mission, in relation to sport development and development through sport initiatives, has been drawing recognition from certain parts of the football community, local communities and international organisations, indicating the rising developmental potential of this programme in Serbia.

5.3 Rugby League in Serbia: Two Stages of Development

Rugby league in Serbia developed in two distinctive stages—from 1953 to 1964 and as of 2001[9].

5.3.1 The First Stage of Rugby League Development: from 1953 to 1964

The onset of rugby league in Serbia (and Yugoslavia) is associated with a visit by two French rugby league teams—the selection of Provence and a student national rugby league team in 1953, whose aim was to promote and spread the game across Europe

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[9] However, it was not rugby league that was first introduced into Serbia. Rugby union was, like football, brought to Serbia by former British students who founded the first rugby club in the town of Šabac in 1919—*Beli orao* (White Eagle) followed by the establishment of a rugby section within the 'Yugoslavia' Sport Society in Belgrade in 1923 (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985). Still, pioneering engagement resulted in weak development of the game, and club foundation. Matches were mostly played between two selections of players from within the same club and the rugby section, while no official competition was organised (ibid.). Reports on the development of the game vanished almost entirely during 1923, marking the end of its development in Serbia during the noted period. Although it is worth annotating this period in the history of the development of this sport in Serbia, it did not play a significant role in spreading the game for at least two reasons. First, its developmental span was short, while the manner of development was rather isolated. Second, there was disparity in the geographical translation of class differences represented through this sport to the social context of Serbia in that period.

(Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985; GI2.1). This connection with representatives of French rugby league is not surprising as, unlike British rugby league, concern for the spread of the game across Europe was high on the agenda of the Ligue Française de Rugby à Treize that was founded in 1934 (Collins, 2006). As Tony Collins comments, '[the] French proved to be far more zealous about expanding the game's geographic horizons than the RFL [the Rugby Football League]' (2006: 73), although both Federations struggled to develop the game within their own countries (Collins, 2006). Hence, in 1953 after a call from French rugby league officials to promote the game in Yugoslavia was positively answered by the then Secretary of the Yugoslavian Sports Union, four promotional matches were played across Yugoslavia. The first one was held in Belgrade on 26 April 1953 (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985: 24), marking the arrival of the game to Serbia (and Yugoslavia). A few months later, the first rugby league clubs were founded—*Partizan* and *Radnički*—considered by many as milestones of the development of both codes of rugby in Serbia and Yugoslavia (GI2.1) while the Belgrade Rugby Association was founded in the autumn of the same year.

From 1953 to 1964, during the first period of rugby league development in Serbia, 12 clubs were founded, actively contributing to the overall development of Yugoslav rugby (see Appendix 8). Some of the clubs remained active even after 1964, switching to rugby union, while some did not manage to remain on the scene due to various constraining factors, such as lack of funds, infrastructure, and coaches. In Croatia during the same period dozens of rugby clubs were established, however, unlike the Serbian clubs, they predominantly played rugby union.

This allowed for organisation of official competitions between the established clubs in Serbia and between Serbian and Croatian clubs, most notably as of 1957 and 1958 when the National Rugby Championship and National Rugby Cup were staged in Yugoslavia. Yet, it is not clear which code of rugby was played in the national competitions. Although some sources indicate that comprehensively, the code played until 1963 was rugby league (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985), the narratives of interview respondents indicate that matches between Serbian and Croatian clubs were played according to rugby union rules (GI2.1).

In the wake of the first rugby competitions, the Rugby Federation of Yugoslavia was established in July 1954 in Belgrade. Organisationally, the Federation operated through two sub-associations of rugby—the Belgrade Rugby Association, and Rugby XV

Committee established in Zagreb for the territory of Croatia. Moreover, the Rugby Association of Croatia was founded in 1962 (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985). It is worth noting that rugby league and rugby union were commonly referred to as rugby XIII and rugby XV, based on French rugby traditions and influenced by close relations established with French rugby XIII bodies (GI2.1.5). However, differences in the codes played in Serbia and Croatia postponed the foundation of a national rugby team. Still, in 1961 the Federation succeeded in organising the first international match between the Yugoslav national team and a French amateur side in Banja Luka, a town in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985). Although it resulted in a defeat for the Yugoslav side, the match drew considerable interest from the public, and the wider sporting community at the time.

Although mass participation in this sport was never achieved in Serbia and Croatia, consequently categorising it as a 'small' sport within the Yugoslav sports classification system, the number of players in senior club sides, the sole competitive element of established clubs at the time, followed the developmental trend of this sport in the country. Whilst exact data on participation rates are not available, the narratives of rugby league pioneers indicate that the average number of rugby league players in Serbia from 1953 to 1964 could have been approximately 320 (GI2.1.3) (see also Appendix 8).

Although characteristic for the entire sports movement in Yugoslavia, the striking motivation for development of rugby league was underpinned by the traits of inclusiveness this sport promoted in Serbia, which did not allow the expression of any social differences. Moreover, albeit unintentionally, '[the] rugby league ethos of northern England's democratic egalitarianism' (Collins, 2006: 85) dovetailed perfectly with the game's wider developmental context in post-war Serbia (and Yugoslavia), embedded in the communist ideologies of unity, solidarity and egalitarianism of the 'people of Yugoslavia'. This is to a certain extent manifested through the diverse demographics of the players and officials who participated in this sport at the time (GI2.1). The varied demographics were reflected through the representation of various nationalities, educational and vocational backgrounds, ranging from high school and university students, university educated professionals, and working class men from all social and economic backgrounds (GI2.1). Nonetheless, one of interview participants firmly underlined that players' backgrounds were mostly rooted in their poor economic status, reflecting the overarching social context in the country during that time

(GI2.1.4). There was a unity between players and clubs embedded in the poor economic situation, as indicated. Evidently, therefore, the stocks of social capital, in the absence of financial capital were decisive in the development of this sport (and others) in Serbia.

Even though it is rather difficult to draw parallels between the development of this sport in Serbia and in its native land—England, a common denominator of development may be found in the strong local community support and engagement. In Serbia, like in inter-war England, for example, the survival of rugby league clubs was dependent on the contributions of their local community, supporters (Collins, 2006: 32) and players, and therefore on developed networking practices experienced through community engagement in this sport.

Yet, unlike *Radnički* and *Partizan*, a certain number of clubs founded in the same period failed to persist due to the lack of sport and wider community financial support, as well as an inability to compensate for it by the creation of networking practices within the community. In addition, financial constraints for the clubs aggravated issues pertaining to equipment and sporting infrastructure. As respondents confirm, the pitches they played on were mostly surfaced with gravel, while they were often banned from playing on football pitches due to the prevailing opinion among sports officials that the pitch surface would be damaged after rugby players finish their training (GI2.1).

The constraints to the sport's development were not, however, restricted only to securing funds, equipment and facilities. They also revolved around training for coaches and referees (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985). The *Conclusions of the V Assembly of the Belgrade Rugby Association* (Zaključci sa V Skupštine Ragbi saveza Beograda), from 1959, clearly indicate that the need for further education of coaches and referees persisted constantly, while the strengthening of the governance practices within the clubs was required so as to promote improved discipline, and advance organisation of competitions and outreach activities (Ragbi savez Beograda, 1959).

Unlike northern England's developmental genesis, rugby league in Serbia (and Yugoslavia) exclusively featured principles of amateurism in both stages of its development. One might conclude that rugby league in Serbia followed the traditions of rugby union clubs in England, which 'were essentially social institutions organized for the purpose of playing the game' (Collins, 2006: 19). Critically, however, this argument has questionable foundations as the tradition of rugby league development in Serbia is

grounded in firm principles of inclusiveness as opposed to the social and class divides rugby union is traditionally associated with (GI2.1). Thus, unlike in England, the concept of amateurism in rugby in Serbia did not develop 'as the ideological expression of middle class attempts to subordinate working class players to their leadership' (Collins, 1996: 22) that rugby union was devoted to. It developed with the aim of contributing to the social and educational role of sport as a generator of physical strength, discipline, fair play, unity, cooperation, and brotherhood. In this sense, the accounts of the former rugby players who were interviewed indicate that for them it was *only* rugby—a game they tremendously loved to play, whose history and origins they barely knew (GI2.1.5; GI2.1.2; GI2.1.4). They could play both codes, but unlike Croatian players, they favoured rugby league—the form they first got to know. Their enthusiasm for the game originated from its dynamics and promotion of physical strength as well as its potential to foster team spirit, friendship and to entertain spectators, whose interest in the game slowly increased (Ragbi savez Beograda, 1959; GI2.1.3; GI2.1.5).

Nonetheless, as a consequence of a series of decisions relating to the future of this sport in Serbia and Yugoslavia, the top governing bodies changed their outlook for its development. In 1964, as reported during the interviews, the fruitful development of rugby league in Serbia was ceased at Belgrade Rugby Association's regular Assembly. It is indicated that among the main reasons for ceasing rugby league development and switching to rugby union was the international image of rugby league, which promoted principles of professionalism that Yugoslavian rugby was opposed to. Likewise, the greater popularity of rugby union on the international scene was seen as a factor that could foster development of the game nationally (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985). In the following year, as a result of this decision, the Yugoslav Rugby Federation was moved from Belgrade to Zagreb, Croatia as a centre of rugby union (or rugby) development at the time.

Although the underlying rationale for abolishing rugby league in Serbia is not known, it may be argued that it followed certain political and social ideologies, rather than sporting ones. Serbian rugby league pioneers suggest the following possible reasons:

> I would really like to ask all of you [participants of the group interview] not to play hide and seek with the reasons for the transfer of the Federation from Belgrade to Zagreb, because those times have passed … This was a political decree and that's it … We had to [switch the codes] although we didn't want to. (GI2.1.1)

While another interviewee indicates that the prevailing practice of rugby union in Croatia and Slovenia were the reasons for switching to this form of rugby in Serbia.

> I played [rugby] XIII until 1964, and then in Badija [an island in Croatia] we had that seminar … and the idea to switch [the codes] originated from Zagreb, because they, Zagreb, Split and the Slovenians, they often played in Europe and they played rugby XV and then they asked to transfer all rugby in Yugoslavia to XV. Therefore, we had in Badija seminars where we got to know the rules of the rugby XV… because the national team played rugby XV, but we from Belgrade did not know much about rugby XV. (GI2.1.5)

In a similar manner, one of the respondents felt that the reasons for switching codes were grounded in the elitism rugby union promoted. He indicated that '[they] have been told that rugby XIII is played by the working class out there' (GI2.1.7). But, in line with previous indications, the reasons for ceasing rugby league in Serbia may be found in the pressure exercised by the international rugby union bodies that strived to limit the spread of the rugby league code across Europe (GI2.1). This sentiment, therefore, may be rooted in the fact that immediately after the decision of the rugby governing bodies to convert to rugby union, the Yugoslav Federation became the member of FIRA (Fédération Internationale de Rugby Amateur) (Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985: 42) in September 1964. Whether political, social, organisational, sporting or all jointly, the above-presented rationales led to the closing down of the first chapter of rugby league development in Serbia in 1964.

5.3.2 The Second Stage of Rugby League Development: as of 2001

The second stage of rugby league development began as of 2001. The intricate nexus between rugby union clubs and later rugby codes, led to a re-emergence of rugby league in Serbia. In other words, the circle between the stages of rugby league and rugby union development in Serbia was closed. In fact, unlike the emergence of rugby union from rugby league in the first developmental stage in Serbia, the new stage is distinguished by the development of *rugby league from rugby union*. Interestingly, the genesis of the *re-emergence* of rugby league is exclusively associated with the activities of a certain number of players from the *Dorćol* rugby club, established in 1998 as a rugby union club (I2.7; I2.3). The club, comprised of locals from Belgrade's central Dorćol district, known for the loyalty of its residents to the local community, was distinguished from a panel of other union clubs, as an entity that is highly competitively oriented, nurturing extremely tough game principles, motivated to prosper and to induce progress from rugby union's, at the time, stagnation and slow development. One of the pioneers of the

second stage of rugby league development and member of the *Dorćol* rugby club, who played 'union' indicates the following:

> […] Well it [rugby union] has never been so strong, it had only 3 to 4 clubs during the 1990s, it is not that I intend to suggest there is something wrong with the people leading rugby union, but it is their mistake not to develop at least 5 to 6 clubs during the 50 years of its existence here … And when we created *Dorćol* we were the only ones who were very successful, we were developing fast … unlike the others, we were very motivated by sporting development, people wanted to train … (I2.3)

Therefore, although the club's attitude was labelled as inappropriate among other 'unionists' who deemed it to be affecting the amateur principles embedded in a 'soft' competitive approach to practicing this sport (I2.7), the position within the union milieu further impacted the club's developmental approach and the emergence of rugby league soon after. Namely, in order to further increase the level of physical and technical skill, and to prove their status as 'tough guys', some elements of rugby league have been introduced to training, and not long after, rugby league was played at the *Dorćol* training matches. Yet, as indicated by some interviewees, this was not the sole reason to introduce elements of rugby league into the game (GI2.2). It was the intention to assess whether rugby league offers better prospects for development in Serbia compared with rugby union, notably considering factors such as the rules of the game as an element in increased development. The accounts of the key actors in rugby league development indicate, however, that the additional factor that fostered this decision was, what was perceived at that time, as a lack of support and harmonious relationships between the Rugby Union Association and the clubs, organisational malpractice and an inability to achieve the sustainable development of rugby union. One of the informants commented on the development of rugby union as follows:

> […] [l]azy, lazy to develop rugby, it [rugby union] was as lazy as the very sport … They were lazy in development because to them having 4 or 44 clubs was the same. To some, having 4 clubs was maybe more suitable because that way it was easier to gain some results, and to some it was easier to secure a place in the national team. (I2.5)

This resulted in a decision of the core structures at *Dorćol* to officially commence rugby league competitions in 2001, while simultaneously still officially competing in rugby union (I2.3; I2.7; I2.8; I2.9; GI2.2). The following year, the same actors founded the Rugby League Federation of Serbia and embarked upon a process of networking with international rugby league bodies.

The era of playing both codes by a limited number of union clubs ended in 2007. The above period was considered to be a test of rugby league's developmental potential, featuring numerous barriers and incentives critical for the evolution of this sport in

Serbia. According to the narratives of the key rugby league officials, the most challenging drawback to be overcome was the obstructive position taken up by rugby union, both nationally and internationally, towards the emergence and parallel practice of rugby league by some clubs (I2.3; I2.7; I2.8; I2.9). Although this may resemble animosities traditionally rooted in class divides, hence the amateur *versus* professional approaches to the game in its heartlands, in Serbia, however, hostilities between the codes are more likely to be linked to institutional ownership, including power relations (governance) between the two codes, including the positions and reputation within international rugby bodies of both codes. Still, the breaking point in the relationship between the two forms of rugby and their institutional and governing positions came after international pressure exerted by rugby union, which impacted rugby league's liberation from the domestic pressure of rugby union. When asked about the relationship of rugby union towards the emergence of rugby league, one of the interview respondents made the following remark:

> It was terrible, the representative of the European Rugby Federation came here in 2004, after they [officials from the Serbian Rugby Union Association] called him to help them to change the Statute of the Association by introducing an article banning players who practice both codes. We met and I asked that gentlemen 'Ok if one couldn't practice rugby XIII could he practice water polo or basketball or any other sport?' and he said 'Yes, one could practice any other sport'. And I said that they [rugby union from Serbia] asked only rugby league to be banned and that this was direct discrimination of the sport. I asked the gentleman 'Did you have this article in your Statute in French [rugby] union' and he said, 'No, because it would be a breach of human rights'. From that point on – 2003/2004 – this wasn't an issue anymore. Because, you know we have never asked a player who is an amateur not to play any other sport including rugby union. (I2.9)

Although, liberated from the bulk of the pressure, the development of rugby league was still tied to resources thinly spread between the two codes.

Furthermore, during this period, extensive international networking was embarked upon by key rugby league actors, which proved to be the central incentive for international recognition and national development. For instance, networking with the Scottish amateur sides that visited Serbia in 2003, whose official, John Risman, later trained the national rugby league team (I2.7), and participation of the national team at the Mediterranean Cup in 2003 and 2004 in Lebanon, challenged rugby league to engage in further structural and organisational capacity building. One of the interview participants involved in the development of rugby league indicated that:

> The key moment in rugby league development was participation at the Mediterranean Cup. Now, obviously we were beaten … it was very … it wasn't a walk in the park at all. The second year we were better. We have been playing against the French national team and others … so we played against players we could only dream of playing in

union. So it was incredible recognition for the players … So I think the key was Lebanon, because people learned that they can prosper, and with whom they can play. (I2.11)

Moreover, from 2003 to 2007, activity at the international level increased, including competitions with the national teams of the Netherlands, Georgia, Russia, the Czech Republic and others (I2.7). Clearly, the developmental strategy for rugby league included a top-down approach reflected in the establishment of a national team rather than a stabilisation of senior national competition and developing the game at a grassroots level. At the national level, competitions suffered from occasional irregularities tolerated for the sake of development. Not to evaluate here the strategic approach and its consequences for further development, it certainly resulted in respective international proliferation of the Serbian rugby league movement, which was one of the founders of the Rugby League European Federation (RLEF) and one of the five original affiliate members of the RLEF (RLEF, 2010). In 2011 it gained full member status within the RLEF and in 2012 it became a full member of the Rugby League International Federation (RLIF). Nationally, rugby league was recognised by the Ministry of Youth and Sport in 2005 and in 2009 by the Serbian Sports Union, qualifying for state sports development grants (I2.9; I2.3).

While the national team was gaining stability, benefiting from international cooperation and exchange with international experts who greatly contributed to capacity building for national rugby league actors, at the national level, a number of rugby union clubs joined rugby league, while new league clubs flourished in the Belgrade area and across Serbia. Finally, in 2007 rugby league separated from rugby union, continuing its journey of rapid development (I2.9; I2.7).

Development of the organisational structure of rugby league in Serbia has its genesis in club activities whose members played a key role in establishing national and regional Rugby League Federations. Eventually, the role of club members within the Federation remained pivotal as the majority of officials within the Federation's governing structure were simultaneously involved in the work of club(s), particularly the *Dorćol* rugby club, and the Federation. Although, this may point to conflicts of interest, the Serbian Rugby League Federation (SRLF), according to various accounts, is directly concerned with provision of support to newly established clubs while generally assisting already established clubs in their development, in spite of their involvement with the work of a particular club.

Structurally, the SRLF Assembly oversees the development of this sport at all levels, while the Managing Board is responsible for implementation of developmental strategies for rugby league in Serbia at multiple levels. Figure 3 shows the organisational structure of the SRLF.

Figure 3. Organisational Structure of the Serbian Rugby League Federation
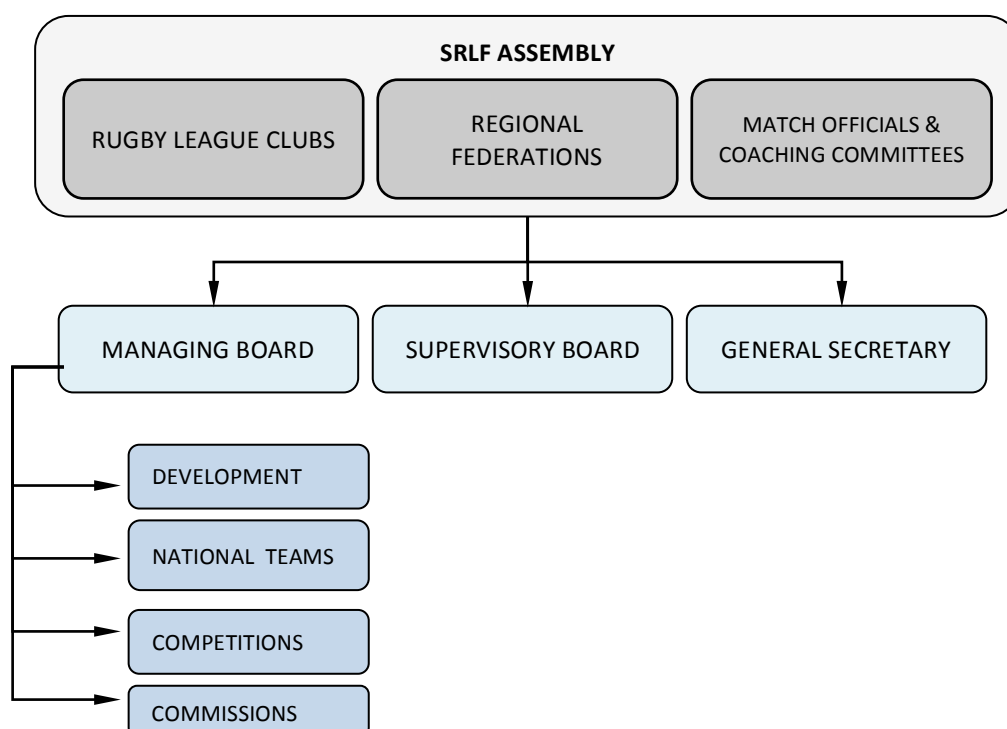
Source: Serbian Rugby League Federation (2011)

Unlike rugby union, as of 2006 development of rugby league underwent a significant positive change, through a fast growing number of clubs taking part in major national competitions, extending to beyond Belgrade and its immediate surroundings. Currently, there are sixteen clubs competing in three divisions, five clubs participating in Student League competitions, including the Army Academy rugby league section, and, by 2013, a growing number of junior and cadet teams within the clubs (see Appendix 9). The total number of registered players in 2012 was 453 (I2.9).

The clubs compete within their divisions in three major competitions—the Serbian Rugby League Championship, the Serbian Rugby League Cup, and the Serbian Rugby League State of Origin, while student and junior selections compete in their own tournaments (Serbian Rugby League Federation, 2011). Interestingly, as indicated earlier, although junior teams developed earlier, propositions for their competitions

began to be implemented only from 2011. Before that, as commented by respondents, junior team representatives were involved in senior competitions. An often-heard explanation of this tolerance for fusion of senior and junior teams was the strong dedication to the development and continuing organisation of competitions, although the protocols of tournaments were infringed (GI2.2; I2.9; I2.3). As shown earlier, concerns for rugby league development were focused on the pool of senior teams and the national selection first and foremost, while development at the grassroots level began only once the number and quality of senior teams had increased. This suggests the emergence of an elevated stage of development for this sport in recent times.

The factor that has directly influenced the opening up of space for the progress of rugby league was, as of 2008, the establishment of student rugby league clubs at the University of Belgrade (UoB). The initiative to establish a student league again came from the pool of former and current players at *Dorćol*, who were studying at the UoB and who held governing positions within student bodies at the University. The strategic framework for development of student clubs was engagement of all available human resources to initiate the foundation of student rugby league clubs through a network of friends dispersed across the University. Likewise, the variety of student demographics and residencies was considered as a developing factor for rugby league, not only within the University competition level, but as potential to develop clubs across Serbia once the actors involved complete their studies in Belgrade. On the other hand, contribution to the development of a new sport within the system of University sport was foreseen as an important segment of the national sport development strategy (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). Thereby, based on broad networks of friends, students and former or current rugby league players, student rugby league clubs, and later the Student League, were established. In that regard, one of the founders of the Student League remarked:

> I was talking to my friends from the club [*Dorćol*]. One of them was at the Law Faculty, one at the Faculty of Philosophy … and the best solution [for development] was to make clubs across the University, some kind of University league, where a lot of people could play … And then we had the idea to … our primary aim was to enter the University, because there you have people from across Serbia, not only Belgrade […] And the key [to Student league development] is that we're more or less the same generation, 1986, and we have made a sort of tacit pact to bring all the people we know, who played rugby for at least a season to bring them to rugby again. All the friends that we knew … (I2.13)

The foundation of the Student League, as it has been indicated, served the purpose of backing up the clubs' pool of players, and increasing the development potential for individual clubs:

> When we made a rugby league club at the Faculty of Philosophy it became a great generator for developing new rugby league players who then played for *Dorćol*, because if they were willing to play tougher rugby, compared to the Student League, they could play for *Dorćol*, which was a big thing. Therefore, through this [student league] club we recruited over 20 or 30 players [to *Dorćol*]. (I2.11)

Moreover, the significance of the development of the Student League is related to the emergence of rugby league within Serbian military structures. The rugby league Army Academy Section was established through networks of connections between students—rugby league players and founders of the Student League. Networks, as a foundation for development, thus contributed to a range of strategic sport developmental aims, including the development of sport within the military in general and the permeation of rugby league across social and institutional boundaries in particular.

Additionally, it is indispensible to account for the demographics of those involved in rugby league so as to accurately portray the developmental genesis of this sport in Serbia. Namely, unlike the traditional image of rugby league players from the sport's heartlands, who overwhelmingly belong to the working class and mostly lack formal or higher education, the Serbian rugby league demography depict an intriguing image—those involved in rugby league development are exclusively men who mainly hold university degrees, coming from various social, ethnic, and in some instance class backgrounds. Still, given the complex transitional social context in Serbia, and its social, cultural, political and economic heritage, class divides as traditionally understood in developed societies cannot be translated into this context. Rather, existing divides revolve around bonding practices along lines of 'us' and 'them', including bonding or segregation based on cultural, including political affinities of individuals from mixed-class backgrounds. Yet, the significance of commitment to education of those involved in this sport has remained a central characteristic of its actors, and has certainly contributed to the evolution of the sport. When asked about demography, notably about the level of education of rugby league actors, one of the interviewees stated:

> The situation here is pretty much bizarre, because it is backwards. It is not to say that we are a significant group of intellectuals, but compared to other sports we are pretty much educationally superior. This is very interesting. This was fostered by that nucleus from *Dorćol*, they all have university degrees and despite living in those ugly transitional times no one has ever underestimated the significance of education. This was one of the most important things to people, and the role of rugby was to help

everyone to gain a better education as well … and with the involvement of students the number of university educated people increased, which is indeed a minority group in Serbia unfortunately, pretty obviously a minority. So this is something that is really good. (I2.11)

Yet, the amateur nature of the game shaped the demography of those involved in this sport. A prominent official interviewed explained this as follows:

Well, the majority of those who can afford to practice this sport come from families that are financially stable, more or less … so they can afford to play some sport while studying, because in contrast to football where players are promised a fortune, here it is clear that playing rugby will not bring them any earnings … so the people involved are employed as security guards, or are students, there are not so many workers as in England, only this seasonal employment, or students … (I2.7)

Clearly, from the perspective of its varied demographic sample, the amateur nature of rugby league also contributed to a progressive trend of inclusiveness in this sport. The variety of social backgrounds of rugby league actors is portrayed through the following interview sequences: 'there are many refugees from Kosovo … and from Bosnia … we have Roma in the junior teams. There are many different … there are youngsters … orphans' (GI2.2.2). Another participant in the focus group indicates the following:

There are a bunch of great guys, there is one who is very nice and good but he works in pizza delivery, while another is a chef and lives in a village in the provinces … another has studied at three faculties and hasn't completed one and works as a bouncer in a club. Also, there is one player who was in jail for three years, there is also one who is a professor at the University and one who is the son of an Ambassador who speaks 7 languages and plays in a band. (GI2.2.1)

These comments illustrate that the complex and diverse demography of those involved in rugby league in Serbia at all levels, may change the traditional image of a game associated with the unity of belonging to a particular social and class group as is the case in the sport's heartlands. In the case of Serbia, the local developmental genesis discussed above strongly affected the inclusion of all actors willing to be involved in the development of this sporting movement and its sporting culture. Therefore, inclusion of those who are 'not like us' but belong to our (imagined) sporting community promoting its culture, and who thus 'may be more like us', became one of the key drivers of the sport's development.

But on the route to the sustainable development of this sport in Serbia, a number of constraints have been encountered. Firstly, although the financial position of the SRLF and the clubs locally has somewhat improved, it still remains a significant developmental obstacle, which, as it will be shown in the following chapters, is to some extent compensated for by stocks of social capital that circulate throughout the structures of this sport. In recent years, particularly after being recognised by the

Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia and the SSU, the SRLF became eligible for allocation of funds from the state budget, for instance amounting to 1.5 million dinars in 2011 and 2 million dinars in 2012[10] (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2012a, 2011b). Moreover, the provisions of the RLEF foresee the funding of full members in order to support their organisational and structural operations, which in 2011 amounted to 13,300 GBP, while in 2012 the grants increased to 28,663 GBP (RLEF, 2012, 2013). Therefore, while the funds inflow at the level of the SRLF further ensure engagement in the fostering of the structural development of the Federation, and implementation of national and regional development policies, at the local level clubs continue to struggle to ensure a sustainable inflow of funds. According to interview accounts and in line with state and LSGs regulations on sport development, clubs are eligible to apply for programmatic financial support through relevant LSG departments. However, as it has been reported, the allocation of LSG funds to clubs is often subject to political networking with the fund managers, which constrains the engagement of clubs in this field (I2.9; I2.3; I2.14; GI2.2; I2.15). Furthermore, the issue of gaining access to funds through sponsorship remains largely unresolved due to a number of impediments, among which the principal ones concern the system of taxation of companies sponsoring sports in Serbia, the paucity of media exposure for rugby league and finally the amateur nature of the sport in Serbia (I2.9). Ergo, the primary sources for clubs are limited to voluntarily membership fees, individual donations, including community support in the form of contributions from fan clubs established to locally support rugby league clubs (I2.14; GI2.2; I2.16; I2.9; I2.3). The interviewee involved in club development matters says:

> We [*Dorćol*] have a fan club and the members contribute 500 dinars per year, they get a membership card and this is a sort of friends' society. There we have around 50 members who donate funds to the club each year. Also, some friends who have small businesses, they help us too. (I2.9)

Unlike in England, for example, the establishment of supporters' clubs does not represent a major factor in ensuring the economic sustainability of clubs, but rather a symbolic contribution by locals to foster community cohesion. While the formal establishment of supporters' clubs is not widely practiced within rugby league, informal voluntarily contributions in kind and in money are extensively exercised.

Additionally, financial constraints affect the inadequate conditions for the organisation of training and matches. It has often been underlined that issues with renting pitches,

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[10] According to the exchange rate on 30 November 2013 the SRLF received 10,910GBP in 2011 and 14,547GBP in 2012.

changing rooms and staff engagement for matches has been difficult to resolve. One of the respondents explains this issue as follows:

> We've been running on enthusiasm only. We have been training on a meadow, at a public space near a hotel, and this wasn't that good for our promotion because you can't attract people to train when you train in the park without changing rooms, showers, so … and now we also have a huge problem because we need 30,000 dinars per match when we are the hosts, and we can't afford that any longer. (GI2.2.2)

For some clubs, however, informal networking and established norms of reciprocity with local stakeholders have enabled sustainable club operations. In this vein, one of the founders of a rugby club in the provinces stated: 'When we started our club we didn't have anything and a friend of ours offered to pay staff for home matches and another gave us a donation for other miscellaneous expenses that we had' (I2.14). In this, and many other cases, within rugby league in Serbia, the role of informal networking proved to be decisive in enabling its more or less sustainable development.

Secondly, although it may be argued that setting up organisational structures within the clubs and the SRLF ensured the continuous development of the sport, to some degree the problem faced by clubs and the SRLF was more fundamental—a scarcity of human resource capacities for development of the sport in the domains of the management, governance, coaching and refereeing (I2.9; I2.15; GI2.2). Moreover, it has been indicated that various duties are delegated among a paucity of actors engaged in multiple roles within the rugby league organisation. Yet, on the other hand, a lack of delegation of authorities and centralised governing strategies practiced by a small number of officials from the SRLF, as was emphasised during the interviews, to some extent disrupted relationships within the league while having a negative impact on the ability to institute capacity building practices and to empower existing human resources (GI2.2; I2.4). The accounts of interviewees point to the above issue in the following manner:

> There is a huge problem … this is particularly the lack of human resources, volunteers, individuals who would be active in the clubs and would be happy to do that … these are problems because the sport is young and in order to develop further we need to separate who does what, who is engaged in governance, who is the coach and who are the players. (I2.9)

Additionally, some respondents felt that the concentration of duties to a few people within the SRLF and the clubs is a developmental pitfall for the sport (I2.20; GI2.2; I2.4; I2.19; I2.15). As it will be shown in subsequent chapters, this issue corresponds with a cultural (and contextual) social capital element—that of *trust* circulating within the structures of this sport (I2.4; GI2.2).

With reference to the aforementioned developmental constraint, that of human resources, the outreach mechanisms to support development of this sport could not be systematically applied to date. If we presume that outreach mechanisms refer to a processes of extension and empowerment (Herron et al., 2009) through mechanisms of engaging target groups around a particular objective (Gray et al., 2006) that compromise dissemination of information and promotion of particular actions through different means of networking and communication, then engagement of a limited number of rugby league actors, although present, was not used to its full potential as a strategy to better support the development of this sport. This pertains particularly to communication with the wider public through media, which according to the majority of interviewees affected the low level of exposure of this sport in print and electronic media (e.g. I2.15; GI2.2; I2.10). Consequently, the interest of the wider audience in this sport is limited to friends, relatives and locals who attend rugby league matches. On the other hand, outreach mechanisms were employed through involvement in the local community, albeit to a limited extent. This was primarily done through cooperation with local schools, as a means to disseminate information and recruit new potential players. Outreach through schools is seen by some as a key source for sport development, however, resources for its increased implementation are still limited (e.g. I2.11; I2.3; I2.15).

Finally, it is indispensible to note the issue of *discipline* as a downside for rugby league in recent years. Although the SRLF copes with negative developments by application of policies related to the violation of rules on the pitch, issues of discipline and, to some extent, cooperation within teams is transferred to the realm of maintaining intact engagements and relationships within the pool of players, coaches, clubs and SRLF officials. When discussing the issue of discipline and violent behaviour on and off the pitch, its causes and consequences, notably among younger players from the particular club, respondent I2.9 had the following to say:

> Those youngsters … this is terrible! Those kids who are from generations born in 1995, 1996 and 1997 … they use drugs … Compared to the kids from the provinces, kids from Belgrade are a huge problem … But these are problems that we have had in the past 3 to 4 years, and this is not only in rugby league, this is in all sports … because those young people somehow negatively … they always blame someone else for their own failures and for them everything can be solved by violence. Literally, they fight, they don't respect their elders and they swear at older people, they test our reactions, I don't know … I think that this is all a consequence of the overall social context, and it is difficult for the club to change this. Because this is an amateur sport, and you're limited by the number of players, and because you don't have enough players, you need to create a kind of balance.

The specific social context undoubtedly plays a role in engendering certain developments by transferring dominant cultural values to the field of sport. However, although in the short term enforcement of particular rules at the micro level may, for instance, hinder the development of clubs by increasing the number of players who are banned from membership in the club due to the violation of rules of discipline, in the long run it may actually contribute to fostering the sport's evolution.

To sum up, in contrast to the GFP, which balances *sport development* and *development through sport* strategic orientations, it is clear that rugby league in Serbia dominantly, but still not exclusively (as will be shown in the forthcoming chapters), betrays a strong inclination toward *sport development*, implementing practices that involve provision of sporting opportunities and positive sporting experiences (Bramham and Hylton, 2008). From the perspective of its status as an *emerging sport*, this is an indispensible strategic phase to be completed that will put rugby league on the sporting map of Serbia and further reinforce its position. Ultimately, in addition to other resources supporting rugby league development in Serbia, active engagement in networking practices for developmental matters, as indicated during interviews, was the key to creating a developmental impetus for this sport. In the chapter to follow the nature of social capital in relation to rugby league will be systematically discussed.

5.4 Summary

Building upon discussion about sport development in the context of Serbia in Chapter 3, the current chapter in striving to provide answers to the first research question of this thesis, has been centred on the developmental contexts of the grassroots football programme and rugby league in Serbia because as stipulated by Spaaij, 'these contexts are of great import if we are to develop robust and nuanced understandings of the factors and processes that affect lived experiences and the social impact of non-professional forms of sport' (2011: 62).

The chapter begins by setting up the space for a social and organisational examination of contemporary grassroots football development in the context of Serbia. It argues, thus, that even though the history of grassroots football is as long as the development of the game itself (concisely outlined in Appendix 5), it was only in recent years that it has been approached structurally by the national football association through the leadership of international football governing bodies, whose sport development strategies have demonstrated recognition that structured grassroots programmes are of import if

football federations intend to engage in sport development, while assisting in the development of communities in a comprehensive manner. Embedded in the particular social context, however, the emergence of the GFP has not progressed without confronting the human, organisational and financial capital challenges. Yet, despite its juvenile developmental architecture, structured networks of organisational operations assisted the GFP to progress towards advancing processes for sport and community development while positioning the programme as a binding force for dispersed football actors concerned with the above issues in Serbia.

In contrast to the grassroots football programme as a predominantly contemporary football developmental category, rugby league developed in Serbia in two historically distinct stages—from 1953 to 1964 and as of 2001, yet both linked with developmental roots arising from the local community engagement of its initiators and the inclusiveness this sport has promoted. In examining the context of rugby league development in Serbia, this chapter has, to a certain extent, pioneered discussion on the evolving trajectory of rugby league in Serbia, including the implications of wider social, political and organisational contexts for its evolution during its first developmental period. This also included possible factors (of a political nature) for its termination and assimilation into rugby union in 1964. But, the intricate nexus between the rugby codes, again led to a re-emergence of rugby league, now from rugby union in 2001 as a consequence of the de-developmental position of rugby union at the time, and the developmental incentives rugby league was able to offer in the Serbian context. Thus, rugby league embarked upon the process of a progressive rise at the national sporting and international rugby league scenes, led by strategically and organisationally set objectives of the core actors who, in the absence of financial, and human resources, dispersed their activities via active engagement in multiple community networks.

Although the aim of this chapter is to offer a contextual understanding of the researched cases, in between, it also suggests that social processes, such as the creation of networks of relationships, were among the central factors to initiate and strengthen their unfolding development. Thereby, the next chapter will examine the nature of social capital as a factor for sport and community development.

CHAPTER 6. The Nature of Social Capital in and through Established and Emerging Sports in Serbia

6.1 Introduction

It has been noted earlier that social capital has a firm grounding to be created in the established and emerging sports that were researched for the purpose of this study. Throughout the corpus of sport and social capital nexus advocacies, the latter is considered as one of the central resources that sport can 'draw on but also one that continually needs renewing' (Nichols et al., 2012: 5). Thus, understanding the mechanisms of social capital creation, its maintenance and distribution both individually and collectively, in the specific sporting and wider social context, requires patterns of relations through which connective architecture in the form of trust and norms of reciprocity is established to be investigated. This chapter, therefore, intends to offer answers to the second research question of this thesis by exploring the nature of social capital in the researched sports, including social capital creation mechanisms. Thus, the chapter firstly discusses the nature of social capital in and around the GFP by analysing the key elements of social capital that constitute a social capital model for this sport programme, while the subsequent discussion revolves around the nature of social capital in rugby league in Serbia.

6.2 The Nature of Social Capital in and through the Grassroots Football Programme

Formal governing structures and formal and informal connectivity practices, including weak and dense ties, embedded in the culture of relationships in and around the GFP streamline the route to profiling the nature of social capital in this sport programme.

6.2.1 The Network as a Governing and Organisational Principle: Multiple Cross-sectoral Relationships

The GFP impacts the ways social connections are generated through formal and informal connectivity structures on multiple levels of interrelation between stakeholders involved in the programme, including interactions triggered in the wider community in which the programme is implemented.

In particular as noted in Chapter 5, the GFP relies upon two main internal governance and organisational principles—the FAS's Grassroots Football Network of Coordinators, who are in charge of the development of grassroots football at the local community level, and individual partnership projects included under the GFP umbrella, contributing to the specific objectives of the programme. Thus, *horizontal, formal* but also *inner, vertical networks of cooperation have been established as the main governing and organisational principle of the programme,* to facilitate the flow of information, influence those who play a critical role in decision-making and to reinforce the identity and recognition of the members of the inner networks (Lin, 2001; Seippel, 2006), so as to accrue resources for this sport programme and the related communities.

The first level of analysis, hence, encompasses exploration of the mechanisms of connections within the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators, between the programme's coordinators and officials from the FAS's Grassroots Football Department, in order to assess the form of the structural relations in this segment of the governing structure. As indicated previously, the Network of Coordinators is organised so as to implement the programme in all regions, counties and municipalities throughout Serbia, connecting 132 coordinators to interact on the basis of territorial proximity. Thus, the Network's structure shows that communication flows in the Network are organised in such a manner as to engage individuals in formal relations through the implementation of programme objectives and who, on the other hand, exchange information and interact in the Network mainly informally.

In that regard, a coordinator in the Network tasked to implement the programme's objectives in one of the southern Serbia counties claims the following: 'We are doing great together, we have superb cooperation in our region amongst us here' (I1.14). In a similar vein, another interviewee from the northern Serbian province, Vojvodina, stipulates that the coordinators within the Network in northern territorial areas have fairly well developed structures of connections, and continues:

> We from Vojvodina … it is still in the development stage … but we have very fair relationships, first of all we are friends, which is very good. And the majority of us have extensive experience of working with children, which is also very good, but the thing we need is better stimulation [in terms of financial support to cover related expenses], which I believe they [the FAS Grassroots Football Department] will be able to provide. (I1.15)

While another respondent declares that:

> Cooperation between coordinators is good, however, there is no cooperation between the regions but within the region, because they all usually meet when there is some

seminar and there they can exchange some experiences and may also hang out together. You will not have Vojvodina [a northern region] calling Kosovo [a southern region] to ask for a model of work. (I1.12)

Moreover, the same respondent pointed to weak information exchange channels developed between the FAS's Grassroots Football Department and a number of the members of the Network, due to a lack of information exchange capacities to be employed through electronic means of communication (email, and other internet-based communication). Yet, according to Putnam and Feldstein, a failure to use electronic means of communications plays a 'surprisingly small role' in fostering networking practices (2003: 9), which could possibly be the case here. Not surprisingly, the phenomenon of mainly local networking between coordinators confirms allegations that social capital is primarily:

> [A] local phenomenon because it is defined by connections among people who know each other [...]. Even when we talk about social capital in national and regional organizations [...], we are really talking about a network or accumulation of mainly local connections. (ibid.)

The above statements show, therefore, that the formal structure of the Network is characterised by different levels of strong and weak relationships, which although formally bound feature an informality of interactions mainly fostered through spatial proximity as one of the factors that shapes the Network's structure and content. Furthermore, the lack of support from the managing body, the FAS, shows that channels of interaction with higher-ranking officials in the Network are based on weak inter-relational strategies. Likewise, the role, influence and the position of programme staff are vital to the ways in which the GFP generates social leverage. Moreover, some of the above statements were also confirmed by higher-ranking officials responsible for maintaining the Network at all levels of its dispersion, underlining the principle of grouping on the basis of mutual interests and recognition as relevant for the structure of this Network. One of them commented on the issue in the following manner:

> Well, there are people [in the Network] who are friends. This is the same as in some sports club where you can find groups of 2, 3 or up to 4 people interacting together. As far as I can estimate, these groups are not bigger because they [the coordinators] are separated physically by territorial distances, but I also think that what connects them is common values. (I1.5)

Clearly, the narratives of the interview respondents suggest that the structure of the GFP's Network of Coordinators, as an organisational strategy for the pursuit of programmatic aims, forges horizontal ties grouped around the members' ability to interact frequently in a local setting, mostly based on recognition and shared identities (Seippel, 2006), while weak connections established between coordinators from

different counties or regions, as a form of information exchange, formally or informally, are covered by top-down communication strategies employed by officials from the Grassroots Football Department. In fact, by weakening vertical chains of communication within the organisation, dependence on informal, horizontal communication patterns occurs because those informal relations foster flows of cooperation, advice, and friendship (Burt, 2005: 3). Thus, the aggregate of informal networks separated by 'structural holes' (Burt, 2005), or dividing spaces, between groups of informal networks that have been created within a formal structure represents a key resource for the development and implementation of this programme.

Moreover, as argued by some social capital theorists (e.g. Putnam, 2000), and according to these research findings, it is evident that a sharp distinction between patterns of connections is not precisely viable due to the dynamic network's characteristics, which subject their structure to fluctuation and intersection between their various entities.

A second level of structural or network introspection concerns mechanisms of cooperation modalities developed between *partnership projects* and the FAS Grassroots Football Department, including networking strategies employed *between* partnership projects operating under the GFP umbrella. Hence, according to the majority of interviewees, cooperation mechanisms between partnership projects and the FAS's Grassroots Football Department is in the developing phase, requiring formal and functional models of cooperation yet to be established (GI1.1; I1.1; I1.2; I1.4; I1.5; I1.6; I1.9; I1.10; I1.11; I1.13), hence, suggesting weak network structures created between the governing body of the GFP, the FAS, and its partners in working towards the achievement of the common programme's objectives. Moreover, a number of interviewees involved in partnership projects claimed that networking with the FAS's Grassroots Football Department is only declarative, with no developed practical cooperation modalities, while cooperation with the rest of the grassroots football initiatives—different partnership projects—is only sporadically developed (GI1.1; I1.1; I1.13; I1.9; I1.2). Moreover, some of the participants have indicated that the projects they are involved in operate independently from the FAS's Grassroots Football Department but that they have agreed to be labelled as GFP projects due to previously established social relations with relevant officials from the Grassroots Football Department, indicating the key *role of informal personal connections* in designing the GFP as an all embracing grassroots football initiative (I1.2; GI1.1). However, those informal connections involved in networking practices between the partnership projects

and the Grassroots Football Department, appear to be of a rather loose nature. Besides, as has been already noted, a few of the partnership projects are bound in a network of cooperation in the realm of common interests, or through agreements to share the projects' beneficiaries seasonally. As is suggested by the interview respondent responsible for the programme governance, '[c]ooperation among projects exists. And in general those are the projects that gather at least 50 percent of the same participants, and clubs and associations, and they practically make up the milieu of grassroots football' (I1.4). In particular, the Mini-maxi League and the FairPlay League, as partnership projects, intersect in profiles of their beneficiaries, which consequently sustains their implementation of the cooperation mechanism (I1.5).

In contrast, *inner* networking, between officials *within* the partnership projects, is firmly established, grounded both in informal and formal modalities of cooperation with the latter being employed as a form of organisational structure, displaying a concentration of the strong ties regularly employed in the local community by the project members, which complies with the models of networking existent within the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators, as previously discussed (GI1.1; I1.1; I1.2; I1.3; I1.9; I1.13; I1.15).

Additionally, the principles of networking, cooperation and partnership development are further reflected in the multiple roles that GFP officials hold, which may indicate the employment of weak social ties within the network of relationships in the programme (Cuskelly, 2008). However, as is reported, strong personal, and informal relationships among individuals engaged in different projects under the GFP umbrella have been among important factors for the multiple engagements some members of the GFP hold (I1.6; I1.7; I1.8; I1.9).

In completing the outlook on the networks of relationships developed in and around the GFP as a social capital element, the present section encapsulates analysis of the vertical cooperation modalities exercised between the GFP in general and the local communities, local self-governments (LSG), the state sport governing bodies and relevant international sports organisations while the final scope of the analysis presents the results with regards to how this programme impacts network engineering among the programme's beneficiaries, the children who participate in different aspects of the programme activities.

The establishment of vertical models of cooperation and connections with local self-government and state governing bodies is deemed to be mostly reliant upon personal relations, political interests, and interest in football on the part of institutional agents in general. In this manner, a number of research participants have stressed that the development of the GFP at the local level was better sustained if there were connections established on the grounds of friendship, with a pinch of political and individual interest involved, including an affection for the sports of those governing local communities. Where these personal networks were developed, cooperation and investment in the programme was fruitful. As one interviewee stated:

> I maintain a good relationship with my local self-government. It is even on a very high level, and I am lucky that people who currently hold some positions in local government have understanding for this entire initiative. (I1.8)

Moreover, politically coloured networking seems to dominate the ways cooperation with the local community was established. In that regard, interviewee I1.7 states:

> In some local communities people who are closer to the local self-government, politically wise, they get support, financial support, others again do not. Unfortunately, politics has entered all spheres of life; it is even present in the domains where it isn't needed at all.

Similarly, I1.11 indicated the following:

> We've been lucky to have a mayor who is my age, 35 years old, and is a football fanatic who invests a lot in football and, through his political position, he affirms football … It is good for us and for his personal political position … and he gives us great support … he might have a political interest in helping our programme, but we definitely benefit from it. (I1.11)

The often-heard referral of 'being lucky' to have established contacts with local self-government representatives additionally suggests the informal character of connections, dependent on the particular political, economic and cultural local context and interests.

In this vein, a number of participants stated that channelling cooperation through vertical networks of connection with LSGs was difficult to achieve as political interests dominated the sphere of social ties in general, prioritising connections that had the potential to enhance individual political agendas. Some of the interview participants found it difficult to enter into these kinds of relationships (I1.15; I1.10), resulting in a lack of vertical connections with formal structures being established.

On the other hand, systematic, formally established networks with the LSGs have been successfully pursued by the OFFS—a partnership GFP's project (I1.9; I1.13; GI1.1). According to GI1.1 respondents, the LSGs are concerned with the provision of human

and financial resources to local community projects based on formal partnership links established through 'letters of mutual intent as an effective modality for collaboration between local stakeholders' (Udsholt and Nicolajsen, 2011: 28). Still, as has been repeatedly underlined by the interviewees, these links are featured with informality and strong ties established between project officials operating locally and the partner LSGs (I1.13; GI1.1; I1.9).

Besides, with exception of one, there was wide spread agreement among interviewees that cooperation with national sport governing bodies is insufficient and that connections are rather weak and are dependent upon financial assistance to the programme, which is deemed to be scant. In this vein, interviewee I1.6 stipulates the following:

> We don't have problems with them [the Ministry of Youth and Sport]. We do not have problems with them generally, except that financial support is neither sufficient nor is it specific [in any other way] so that we could be happy and could offer more [programme results].

Hence, it is the lack of financial support that transcends the ways vertical connections with the state sport governing bodies are to be made. However, the narratives of state sport officials contradict the views of GFP representatives, indicating that cooperation with sport organisations in general is satisfactory (I3.2). As interviewee I3.2 further points out, apart from financial support, networking is based on different sorts of non-financial—administrative or various capacity building—assistance, mostly based on weak and formal social ties.

Additionally, cooperation with international sport governing bodies such as FIFA and UEFA, including the donors in the field, is grounded exclusively upon formally established channels of communication, divided between particular projects within the programme. In other words, each initiative researched for the purpose of this study maintains their own, separate networks with international stakeholders, whose role is to develop grassroots football initiatives by supporting them mainly financially in order to complete their respective agendas in national and international football development matters. Thus, it was often indicated during the interviews that cooperation with international organisations concerned with sport and community development through sport is better, more formally functional and structured compared to cooperation with the FAS or the Ministry of Youth and Sport, including other organisations involved in the delivery of developmental outcomes in the domain of grassroots football nationally (e.g. GI1.1; I1.1; I1.9; I1.13). Therefore, crossing cooperational boundaries of the

national context yields extended structures of formal, outward-looking or weak ties for this programme.

Finally, one of the emerging research aspects with respect to networking and cooperation considers investigation of networking practices created among programme beneficiaries—the children gathered by the programme, and the implications of their involvement in grassroots football for the local community. It is worth noting that the research design of this study did not envisage sampling the children involved in the GFP for the interview phase. This aspect was investigated through the personal accounts of the interviewed respondents—the GFP officials who have been directly involved in working with children. Thus, the study indirectly addresses the issues of networking among programme stakeholders based on the views of their instructors, coaches and programme administrators.

According to the interviewees, participation in the GFP events facilitates the creation of informal patterns of connections displayed through increased socialisation and friendships. The programme serves as an instrument to gather children around football with the aim of developing their sporting capacities, including socialising beyond the realm of sport. With this in mind, one of the respondents had the following to say:

> I know from the experience because I've been involved in the Mini-maxi League for seven years and we play in a league which is regional and gathers around 70 clubs or football schools that play there … and I've noticed that on the day of the tournament they [the children] gather in groups and try to find friends from another town or village who they have met before. And significantly, generations of children that are not involved in the programme anymore who have played before are in contact even today and this is also transferred to their parents. (I1.8)

Playing football via taking part in the GFP, allowed the development of social relations among participants, but as commented by the same respondent, those relationships are selective on multiple levels—a number of smaller groups exist within the population participating in the programme, whereas group distinctions are made on the grounds of interest, sporting skill, personal appearance and even the kind of computer games they play (I1.8). Similarly, the researcher's observation notes from an event organised by a GFP partnership organisation capture the ways the children gather and communicate while waiting for the match to start: 'The boys from one team hang out with each other in groups on the terraces. There are interactions neither with other teams nor with any other people around them. They all seem to be very similar in their communicational attitude' (Field notes, 9 September 2012). This suggests the sequencing of network connections, in the context of participation within a particular grassroots football

initiative, through separated identities within the collective identity ascribed to involvement in football or in other words 'the group has symbols of its identity separate from the outside world' (Burt, 2005: 116). Still, initiatives operating within the GFP 'preserve an informal forum where everybody is welcome' (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 464). Moreover, as noted by the interview respondents, football for development projects that include participants with some sort of disability proved to be fruitful in establishing close social relations built on friendship and informality. These bonds have the potential to be extended beyond sport to other realms of social engagement. As is asserted by one interviewee: 'Some of them even got engaged and, as we said, communities would fraternise due to their loving relationships … these things happen— kids will be kids' (I1.3). This quote emphasises what an important factor playing football is for disabled people socialising and networking, which enhances their social interaction even in the realm of their private lives.

From the above discussion about the forms (and density) of the networks comprehensively inspected within the multiple structural levels of GFP operation, it is clear that flows of different levels of formal and informal, strong and weak ties circulate throughout channels of connections, yet with prevailing informal and thick modes of cooperation encapsulated through information exchange, recognition and influence employed in the formal Network structure set as an organisational principle of the programme—with the exception of networks of relationships that extend beyond the Serbian contextual limits, which are characterised by looseness and formality. Overall, the established networks are valued as contributors to sport development practices as well as multi-level community development through sport processes, which include interpersonal, intra-group and inter-group formal and weak and informal, often strong levels of connections.

6.2.2 The Culture of Networking in and around the Grassroots Football Programme: Trust and Norms of Reciprocity as Relational Qualities

If a network represents structure, then the trust and norms of reciprocity associated with the network(s) of connection mean a culture of establishing connections, or a culture of relationships developed within the network that cumulatively stands for individually and/or collectively owned social capital—a resource the GFP and its stakeholders may benefit from. While the levels of trust in and around this programme prove to be of a rather lower degree, exercising norms of reciprocity appears to be more intensive.

Besides, the stronger level of particularisation is more immanent to trust created within the boundaries of this programme's networks compared to the predominantly generalised nature of norms of reciprocity practiced in this context. Moreover, comments made by the interview respondents revealed that for the creation of trust and norms of reciprocity the following elements are focal: reputation, discipline, responsibility, work results and friendship. Additionally, the interdependency of trust and norms of reciprocity, as elements of social capital, show an interesting model of relation. People will reciprocate, either in a particularised or generalised way, yet the levels and types of trust may not necessarily follow trends in and types of reciprocity, as is often suggested in popular social capital debates (e.g. Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002).

At the level of the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators, most statements indicate that cooperation within the Network, between its members, is in the vast majority of cases grounded in particularised social relations, implying a circulation of *particularised trust*, while *norms of reciprocity* interchangeably move along particularised and generalised axes.

In that regard, one of the interview participants, a member of the FAS's GFP's Network indicates the following: 'For example, I trust people I closely cooperate with and with whom I work very frequently, and of course that … but this trust, … this trust is at a low level' (I1.9). In a similar vein, participant I1.7 notes that trust is dependent on the particular person in the Network, including his or her reputation.

Interestingly, interviewee I1.8 sees trust as a key resource for the Network, which, at the programme's outset, appeared to have a generalised character:

> This whole story is based on that [trust]. We were gathered on the basis of trust, even though we didn't know each other before. We are mostly people who are great enthusiasts, who worked with children, worked in football, worked in a way that was good, that was genuinely good for children and for grassroots football. And now, after a year and a half [of engagement in the Network] it is clear that it isn't that functional … we still function on the basis of trust but the circle has narrowed and, with time, I'm afraid that only a small number of people will be left. It's not that simple. There are people who are not ready to invest their time in this and, after all, they question what's the use of all this, for them personally.

Evidently, with time there has been a decrease and an alternation of the forms of trust from generalised to particularised, impacted by levels of engagement in the Network and the relevant reputation of the Network's members, which initially influenced the development of generalised trust. Similarly, the senior official of the FAS Grassroots

Football Department indicates that there is still potential for development of generalised trust: 'There is trust in those people in the Network as those people are trusted people, trusted in terms of their previous results in this field' (I1.6). Clearly, this confirms the significance of the professional reputation of Network members for the development and sustainability of trust. Moreover, another high-ranking programme official asserts that time, discipline and responsible conduct by members of the Network are crucial for enhancing trust at multiple levels: 'Our whole Network and team are relatively young and they still haven't built trust towards us [the FAS]' (I1.5). This sentiment was shared by the majority of interviewed members of the Network (I1.11; I1.6; I1.7; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15). The above statements, thus, testify that it is mainly particularised trust that is instilled in social relations between the Network's members, based upon friendships, informal social relations, recognition, reputation, and discipline, while trust, whether particularised or generalised, in the principal managing body of the Programme—the FAS—is deemed to be limited.

On the other hand, the comment below illustrates that albeit circulation of mostly particularised trust features social ties within the Network, norms of reciprocity extend beyond particularised boundaries of cultural social capital elements, showing a generalisability motivated by the eagerness of GFP's Network members to invest in sport development.

> We invest our own resources to make this programme function. We consider that this programme deserves it. Our personal assets—you get in the car and drive. And we use our own computers, we don't have an office, we use our own cars. (I1.7)

Correspondingly, interviewee I1.14 describes the ways mutual support is manifested in the Network as a means to advance the programme's prospects: 'I didn't drive [from south Serbia to come to a GFP seminar in the north of Serbia], I have a colleague who drove and who paid for the petrol, we needed to come [to the seminar] and they took me with them'.

Moreover, as has been noted by research participants, trust and norms of reciprocity *within individual partnership projects* are well developed mainly characterised by generalisability bound with the projects' domains of operation, which, on the other hand, and in this case may be understood as aggregate of particularised trust and norms of reciprocity spanning throughout the projects (I1.1; GI1.1; I1.2; I1.3). On the other hand, trust and norms of reciprocity *between partnership projects* are vastly limited and, where created, depend on overlapping project interests, such as the share of the same

groups of beneficiaries, featuring more particularity than generalisability (I1.2; I1.6; I1.5). In addition, if developed, trust in the FAS from the side of its partner organisations appears to be dependent on the reputation, particular support and engagement of senior FAS programme officials, not the organisation as a whole, again confirming the circulation of particularised trust throughout channels of interaction between the above organisations (I1.3; I1.2; I1.1).

At this level of introspection, norms of reciprocity are of a wider spectrum. Working to advance mutual programme objectives with the core aim directed towards grassroots football development, officials from partner organisations have often stated that, although trusting relationships are scarce, help, support, provision and exchange of resources between the FAS and the partnership projects are considerable because as GI1.1.2 indicates, '[…] we hope to have some pay off sometime in the future, as we work on the same thing'.

Political trust, or in some instances referred to as generalised trust in the literature that exists in vertical networks of connection (if) established with formal systems—LSGs and the relevant state institutions—resides, within the realm of the GFP, at considerably low levels. Participant I1.9 describes this as follows: 'I don't have trust in some higher instances, in the state, in institutions, in local self-government and municipalities, in people who should give us some financial support. I absolutely don't have any trust in them'. Furthermore, where developed, linking with LSGs is firmly based on trust and norms of reciprocity previously established in the local community through friendship and/or engagement in football and/or sport in general, indicating that political trust in this context is particularised while norms of reciprocity in these relations adhere to the model of trust (I1.7; I1.8; I1.11; I1.9; I1.13).

In contrast, a minority of participants who have, through partnership projects, developed links with local self-governments, asserted that trust in LSGs is fairly well developed (GI1.1) indicating a generalised character of trust and norms of reciprocity bound with the projects operation instances. One of the interviewees engaged in a partnership project, the OFFS, operating in the south of Serbia, notes that, '[i]n Preševo we had an MP … who came and opened the event there and supported our activities … and in those small communities you can see this effect [of support by institutional agents]' (I1.13).

Furthermore, the gap in trust towards state institutions is deemed to be affected by the lack of support provided for sport development in general, accompanied by the dominance of individual interests, even in cases where some level of support is provided. This equally implies a paucity of norms of reciprocity, including the particularised character of cultural fillers created within vertical networks of connections:

> I don't think that [trust towards state institutions concerned with sport] is at a high level, and that we, as a society, need to work on that more, [because] it is all about self-interest, and generally it is all about individual interests, and in that sense trust has been neglected. (I1.15)

Additionally, in contrast to the types and levels of trust in national institutional agents concerned with sport development, trust in international stakeholders supporting grassroots initiatives in Serbia is elevated, being mainly of a generalised character (GI1.1; I1.4; I1.5; I1.3; I1.1; I1.13).

Finally, trust as a cultural, relational component created amongst project beneficiaries (participating children and their parents) and between project beneficiaries and programme officials is yet again of a particularised character, being highly developed among the children themselves (I1.8; I1.6; I 1.7: I1.9; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15), while between parents and programme officials it resides at rather low levels. One of the study informants discusses the issue of trust development between parents and project officials in the following manner: 'I need to tell you that people don't trust each other! People don't trust that you work in the interest of their child … and of course this is because we live in the country we live in' (I1.3). Likewise, as asserted by informant I1.8, parents are uncertain who trains their children and how they are trained and taken care of when they take part in GFP events. Therefore, although existent, the paucity of trust, including the share of generalised trust, is what features in the above relationships. Additionally, albeit at this level of introspection, norms of reciprocity share the same typology as trust, their levels are extended through the advancement of individual interests of the parties involved, thus undermining the programme's overall development objectives:

> Those coaches … not to talk about how they actually misbehave. But, being burdened with financial problems, coaches favour wealthier children to play in their team, the children whose dad is a director or a petrol station owner, so that they [coaches] can get free petrol and then they [coaches] will turn a blind eye and let those wealthy children play. (I1.11)

Evidently, grassroots football development may become subject to the exercise of particularised norms of reciprocity, which assist in the fulfilment of individual interests at the expense of positive sport developmental practices.

Thus, comprehensively taken, although both cultural constituents of social capital tend to be insufficiently developed, norms of reciprocity show wider developmental ambit in the networks of relationships established within and around the GFP. Besides, the interplay between trust and norms of reciprocity should not be understood as linear. That said, evidence presented in this section demonstrates that an increase in reciprocity may not necessarily lead to an increase in levels of trust or their equivalent forms in the networks of relationships.

6.2.3 A Social Capital Model for Established Sport: Is Bonding All Relevant?

This section integrates structures and cultures of connections—the networks, trust and norms of reciprocity discussed previously—into a coherent social capital blueprint for the GFP, through representation of individually and/or collectively owned bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Hence, it is about the determination of dominant patterns and cultures of connections that model social capital as a developmental resource.

Clearly, the GFP contributes to the production, reproduction and distribution of principally *bonding* social capital, circulating throughout multiple levels of connections established in and around the programme. Albeit embedded in a formal network of connections, which serves as an organisational and governance framework, cooperation between programme officials—including coordinators of both the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators and the partnership projects—is implemented in an informal manner, while, the cultural aspects of social capital in these networks—trust and norms of reciprocity—are developed between 'like us' individuals, intermittently bridging the structural holes that exist between network entities. However, these structural holes to be bridged are of a wider diameter when inspecting networks of connections *between* partnership projects under the GFP and between partnership projects and the FAS's Grassroots Football Department, indicating that dense inner networks have developed (within the particular initiatives), thus generating sequenced bonding social capital. Still, although, as discussed earlier, both cultural aspects of social capital in the above

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networks display a particularised nature, the developed norms of reciprocity do not coincide with the levels of particularity trust is featured with. Norms of reciprocity in these constellations exists within a wider, more generalised spectrum, shortening the distance between bonding and bridging social capital, creating an intermediary space for the formation of a hybrid type of social capital along the bonding-bridging axis. This finding confronts Putnam's (2000) suggestion that, generally speaking, membership in formal networks enhances *generalised trust* and, consequently, bridging social capital, as he points out, while confirming that *generalised* norms of reciprocity may be increased by virtue of associational membership. Nonetheless, the above evidence equally confirms that sporting structures, such as clubs or associations, are sites for the creation of prevailingly bonding social capital, as advocated often in the sport and social capital nexus literature (e.g. Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Spaaij and Westerbeek, 2010; Zakus et al., 2009). That said, the type of social capital developed between the programme's beneficiaries—the children, their parents, and the wider community, forged by the projects operating only locally[11]—is of a predominantly bonding character, as these projects provide a space for interactions based on matching sporting and life-style identities, existing friendships and mutual support, developed in these communities mostly grounded in particularised trust and norms of reciprocity (e.g. I1.11; I1.10; I1.8). On the other hand, being programmatically instilled by projects that cross spatial borderlines, bridging between participants from various social and spatial backgrounds—including ethnic, gender and disability parameters—has gradually been achieved, impacting the suppression of the radius of 'othering' among programme beneficiaries. Yet, the bridging effect is mostly situational and temporarily bound. If maintained, however, and extended by crossing these boundaries it tends to convert into denser, identity-forged relations, or into bonding social capital, or friendships, as a key aspect of children's (and young people's) social capital (Tomanović, 2002, 2012; Walseth, 2008). If not regularly practiced, on the other hand, the bridges will most probably fade away. When asked about relationships between children involved in a grassroots football event that gathers participants from various municipalities across Serbia, participant I1.9 states:

> Children from different municipalities usually don't have any kind of contact, because they don't travel, they live in the local community, they go to school there. But in these 5 days during the event, they meet each other and make friends, they travel together, because the five-day event is organised in three different municipalities—they will be two days in one, two days in another and one day in the third municipality, and that way

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[11] These projects are: the Mini-maxi League, the My School—My Club project, and the FairPlay League.

children travel from municipality to municipality … and meet other children. Later their paths might cross again.

In addition, the case for extension of bridges between 'unlike us' groups and individuals within networks created by grassroots football initiatives occurs in relationships created between intellectually disabled children/youth and regular population children/youth categories involved in the 'Unified Sport', a Special Olympics project and a GFP partnership project. Still, as asserted by interviewee I1.3, although these bridges between the regular and deprived population groups are created impacting upon processes of social inclusion through sport in the community, the core of the bonds are created between members of disadvantaged groups within a club (that take part in the initiative) or between the same category of the population from different clubs situated in different local communities, which in most cases transcends interaction in the realm of their engagement in sport. Correspondingly, this grassroots football initiative facilitates the creation and maintenance of both, bonding and bridging social capital the disadvantaged population benefits from, in the form of mutual support, friendship, recognition and inclusion in sport and the community (McConkey et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the place for locating stocks of *bridging* social capital in the programme is in filling the 'structural holes' between particular projects within the GFP and in the multiple engagements and positions held by certain programme officials in the networks established. Yet, although programme resources are dependent on the engagements of the programme coordinators the majority hold the status of volunteers, theoretically advocating the existence of stocks of bridging social capital within the grassroots football network (Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000), the mechanisms that foster multiple engagements are at opposite ends of the social capital spectrum—informal social networks and particularised trust with a blend of both particularised and generalised norms of reciprocity are those that increase opportunities for multiple engagements. This finding may, in some instances, be consistent with bonding and bridging social capital creation, matching processes such as particular similarities, hence, shared identities that yield both types of social capital (Spaaij, 2011: 94). Thus, in line with Hughson's et al. arguments, in the case of sport, bonding and bridging social capital will circulate simultaneously (2005) yet, as evidence from this case study suggests, with prevailing bonding social capital developed. In addition, although at its very inception the programme facilitated the development of bridging social capital— the establishment of an organisational structure and the resulting networks was

dependent upon generalised trust and norms of reciprocity existing between programme officials—with time, the initially forged social capital transformed into bonding as generalised trust and norms of reciprocity changed their nature increasingly showing particularised characteristics. The transferability that occurred between types of social capital is strongly situational and context-dependent, including factors such as future expectations of relationships, especially those established with the principal governing body—the FAS—which did not match with the actual employment of governance principles, thus affecting a change in the types and levels of trust and reciprocity (e.g. I1.13; I1.14; I1.6; I1.15). In some instances, transforming relations in this context corresponds to what Ronald Burt calls the 'decay of relations', the tendency of social relations to change and weaken over time (Burt, 2005: 197).

As the findings of this study suggest, one way in which the GFP contributes to the development of social capital in the domain of intersections between bridging and linking social capital is through connections established between the GFP as a whole and the relevant international sports organisations and donors. These relationships, as noted by interview respondents (e.g. I1.4; I1.5; GI1.1; I1.3; I1.6), show a broad range of generalised trust and norms of reciprocity, developed through the established network channels. Simultaneously, this type of social capital transcends the limits of this programme and becomes an asset of the organisations involved in the programme, either as a governing or a partner organisation, providing them with resources in the form of financial support, information exchange, and reinforcement, while on the other hand, as suggested by Stanton-Salazar (1997) cited in Spaaij (2011: 116), this type of social capital created contributes to meeting the institutional agendas of international partners. Still, although the bulk of international agents involved in the programme intersect between organisations operating under the GFP, these intersections and thus interactions are not integrated at the level of the programme as a whole. Thus, and as noted earlier, social capital acquired by the programme represents the aggregate of the individual organisations' resources (I1.1; I1.3; I1.4; I1.5; GI1.1).

In an attempt to further analyse the nature of social capital in and around the GFP, the issue of linking social capital comes into focus. As discussed in Chapter 2, *linking* social capital refers to resources created in vertical networks of connections between different social entities and public institutions (Woolcock, 1998). As we have further seen in Chapters 2 and 3, it represents the capacity of network agents to leverage multifaceted resources from public institutions beyond the immediate community

(Woolcock, 2001). Therefore, this aspect of social capital is assessed through the interaction of GFP representatives with local self-governments, municipalities and the relevant state institutions charged with sport development.

Clearly, stocks of linking social capital developed between the programme in general and LSGs representatives in charge of sport development predominantly relies upon the exchange of particular individual and political interests, including an affection for football, as a linking pattern in the network of relations. As was shown in the preceding sections, where established, these relations are characterised by particularised trust and norms of reciprocity, indicating that links generated with institutional agents—in this case LSGs representatives—are typical for the creation of bonding social capital. Yet, although dominant in the relations of the programme representatives and the local communities institutional agents, this pattern of linking social capital does not match relationships generated between the LSGs and the OFFS, a partnership project of the GFP. The formal networks of relations between the OFFS and their partners in local government are characterised mainly by generalised trust and norms of reciprocity (GI1.1), impacting upon an increase of linking social capital in the programme in general. But why does a difference exist in the ways this partnership project generates linking social capital when compared to other GFP's initiatives? The findings of this research indirectly point to issues of the reputation and trustworthiness of the GFP implementing organisation involved in these networks (GI1.1). Namely, as argued by research participant GI1.1.2, who is active within the OFFS, 'the FAS is maybe respected by some people, but other people do not respect it at all and want, instead, to be distanced from it … and in these circles we are a recognised organisation [OFFS] and people trust us'. This type of statement, including discussion on the elements of trustworthiness, was often heard from the other participants in the study who are directly involved in the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators (e.g. I1.8; I1.6; I1.2; I1.10; I1.11; I1.14).

Besides, linking with the state institutional agents in charge of sport development was deemed to be insufficient, indicating a paucity of trust and norms of reciprocity developed in these networks in general. This is indicative of the low level of linking social capital created in these lattices, which directly affects the types and amounts of resources acquired for the development of the programme and the outcomes it is supposed to yield. As noted earlier in this section, development of trust in state institutional agents depends on the level of financial support they provide as a

developmental incentive for the programme. The majority of the interviewees stressed that this kind of support was inadequate, with exception of interviewee I1.3 who suggested that trust in state institutions is well developed, meaning that financial support was fair and sustainable on an annual basis, thus pointing again to linear dependencies between financial support from state institutions and the development of linking social capital.

On the other hand, underdeveloped formal linking social capital with state institutions may be caused by the generation of 'political social capital'—an often practiced pattern of cooperation with public institutions in Serbia—which refers to networks of connections between social actors who have control over access to public resources that enables them to use these resources in order to acquire private benefits via informal membership in these networks (Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Cvetičanin et al., 2012). When established, the core of the glue that holds the network together is the resulting private, or individual benefit, acquired on the basis of extended norms of reciprocity that infuse the network, even though those involved in this type of social capital creation may be complete strangers (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011). This situation, inspected through the prism of social capital, confirms once again the reasons for an endemic absence of trust in public institutions in Serbia, as indicated in the existing literature (e.g. Ganev et al., 2004; Gordy, 2004, 2013; Sotiropoulos, 2005; Stojiljković, 2010).

By the same token, although this form of social capital is accepted as a legitimate relational principle that, in the context of Serbia, yields certain resources, theoretically it can be understood as a type of *negative social capital*, imbued by the wide range networking practices that programme officials take part in and generated within the framework of linking and bonding social capital concepts. As further stressed in the literature, negative social capital is generated when misuse and manipulation of trust and norms of reciprocity is present in relations between sports officials and institutional agents, attempting to indulge individual interests, whether politically or financially motivated, that may be in conflict with sport and community development (Long, 2008; Numerato, 2011; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012). In part, this was immanent for relational strategies established between the GFP's officials and the LSGs representatives, as was shown earlier in this section (I11.7; I1.6; I1.9; I1.1; I1.2; I1.11; I1.14; I1.15). As was repeatedly reported, the essence of networking is on the axis of norms of reciprocity developed as a result of exchanges between individual political

interests and the interest of collective sport development, while trust may or may not be involved as a factor for the creation of this form of social capital. Therefore, although negative in its nature, this type of social capital created by the programme contributes to an increase of collective resources for sport development. Additionally, some evidence of conflict of interests, reflected in the multiple roles taken by the programme officials—involved in both the activities of the GFP and the LSG positions has been provided (e.g. I1.13; I1.6; I1.7). Namely, one of the participants described his relation with the LSGs as follows: 'Cooperation with local self-government is great. Okay, I am in charge of sport development in my municipality, I work there … and people from other municipalities, people in charge of sport are very cooperative' (I1.13). Thus, resources for programme development, in the form of a position of a programme official in a network of connections created between various stakeholders, have been acquired to the satisfaction of multiple interests surrounding the activities of a particular official, who consequently pursues the programme agenda through his/her institutional position. Yet, although these multiple positions, by their very nature, may not be harmful to any of the endeavours of the particular agent, they may further undermine the levels of already scarce generalised trust that citizens have in the public institutions, of which local self-government is a part (EC, 2013; Jerinić, 2006).

In summing up the model of social capital for the GFP, it is indicative that bonding social capital has ascendancy over other forms of social capital within the programme's relational contexts. Moreover, given the state of its domination, bonding social capital tends to intrude relational principles in the domain of vertical connections with institutional agents, veiling linking social capital with a plethora of bonding characteristics. This characteristic of linking social capital corresponds with practices of establishing social relations with institutional agents in the context of semi-peripheral societies as argued by Numerato (2011: 47). On the other hand, while fairly well developed in the context of established cooperation mechanisms with international partners, bridging social capital within the context of this programme's activities at national level tends to be diminished by transformative bridging-bonding processes that reduce stocks of bridging social capital in favour of stocks of bonding social capital, which confirms that, at an organisational level, social capital is not a stable asset of a sport organisation but rather a dynamically transferable asset (Numerato, 2011: 41), whose dynamism is situationally and contextually swayed (Spaaij, 2011).

6.3 The Nature of Social Capital in and through Rugby League

In spite of the different sporting settings, including organisation, structure and governance, and the different developmental aims and positions of the two researched sports, the nature of social capital in rugby league corresponds to a certain number of the characteristics of social capital generated within the realm of the grassroots football programme. Still, as will be shown in the following lines, the connectivity span in rugby league tends to be stimulated by strong developmental incentives through multi-layered internal and external social relations, filled by norms of reciprocity and trust in and around this sport, which fasten the model for social capital.

6.3.1 Networking in Rugby League: Facilitating Development through Social Connections

The size of networks of relationships is directly proportional to the volume of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) an individual or collective can mobilise. The research results provide evidence of a multitude of networks of relationships developed within and around the rugby league organisation, indicating circulating social capital as a resource available for the development of this sporting community and the community the sport is embedded in (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003). This volume of social capital cannot, however, be taken as a permanent category due to the fact that networking and cooperation at all levels of interaction in rugby league 'changes, it is never constant and it is never the same, it is always subject to change' (I2.11). Therefore, in an attempt to systematise the connectivity strategies in rugby league and encompass structural channels essential for investigating the nature of social capital, informal and formal networks, including development of weak and strong ties, have been investigated within the framework of the *internal* and *external* practices of cooperation established in this sport.

Internal Networking

Inner or horizontal networking and cooperation in rugby league is developed across three respective levels: 1) in the clubs, and in the SRLF, 2) between the clubs, including the national team, and 3) between the SRLF and the clubs.

Although membership in the sport club is formally structured, the testimonies of all interview respondents indicate the key role of friendships as a form of informal and

dense connection in networking practices between club members, including in the SRLF. In this vein, one of the interviewees, initially involved in the development of the *Dorćol* rugby club, states

> […] [T]he majority of players in rugby league keep coming because of socialisation, of course, besides their love of the sport, this is one of the major reasons for their involvement in this sport. They have simply found some people with whom they want to spend time. (I2.11)

Similarly, another research respondent has indicated the following:

> The main reason why I spent so much time in my club is to socialise. We have been hanging out together, and made friends, and in a situation like this it is a much greater satisfaction to play a match. We don't have any kind of hierarchy except on the pitch. (I2.15)

These indications firmly prove the existence of thick, informal ties developed throughout the layers of in-club interactions that extend to the realms of private life.

Compared to other clubs, however, as is suggested by the interviewees, *Dorćol* is the club where these types of networks were for a long time developed better than elsewhere: '[…] generally, we are friends, a community, and we from *Dorćol*, we are really good and this is a positive thing' (I2.1).

Albeit informality, including the thickness of social relations is what characterises in-club inter-relational strategies generally, the plurality of such networks indicates the existence of structural holes between them, or in other words, the presence of smaller informal networks, dense in character within a particular club divided by a broad range of identity markers such as, for instance, generational unity, a sense of belonging to the local community, cultural and sub-cultural self and group identification, and newcomers to the sport (see Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009: 1211), excluding the social and class backgrounds of networks members as dividing markers (e.g. I2.1; I2.3; I2.5; I.2.7; GI2.2; I2.9; I2.10; I2.11; I2.12; I2.13; I2.14; I2.17; I2.18). Still, there are exceptions, from sequenced, informal in-club networking patterns, or 'clique forging' (GI2.2) within rugby league. Clubs within the Student League represent an exception to the above. As was suggested by one of the research participants involved both in a Student League club and a First League club, clubs within the Student League are characterised by greater unity and the presence of a smaller number of in-club divisions: 'There are no sub-groups in the Student League clubs, no clans or divisions, we are all more or less together' (I2.10). If we consider that fewer identity markers exist, the smaller the divisions are, then in the case of the Student League clubs it may be argued that those markers are minimised with respect to generational unity, belonging to a certain faculty

within the University, the educational level and interest in certain social, cultural or scientific fields having a greater impact on cohesion and reducing the number of structural holes in the clubs' networks.

In addition, given that the SRLF was established from a pool of *Dorćol* club founders (and players) inner associational networking is strongly based on firm informal relations and long lasting friendships between the Federation's actors. When asked about the principles of cooperation, information flow and type of connections in the SRLF, research participant I2.3, closely involved in the work of the Federation and of a particular club from its foundation, stated that relationships within the organisation are harmonious, well rooted in informal exchange and friendship, mutual respect and agreement upon key matters of interest for the organisation and also extended to the realms of private lives. The characteristics of this particular network, however, make it relatively closed for new members to be involved in the work of the Federation, as was argued by most of the research informants (e.g. I2.4; GI2.2; I2.15; I2.20).

Investigation of another two levels of inner, horizontal networking within the rugby league organisation concerns relational channels established *between* the clubs, on the one hand, while, on the other hand, it tackles developed cooprational principles *between* the Federation and the clubs, including the issue of cooperation in the national rugby league team.

Networking *between* clubs in rugby league, both by players and members of the governing structures, is deemed to be mostly founded on informal networking practices, involving open channels of information and exchanges of professional experience. Whilst these channels of communication are predominantly of a direct character, established between the actors in the network, in cases of the emergence of structural holes, networking is facilitated by the SRLF, including actors active in the Student League clubs. In addition, in contrast to the GFP case study, networking between the actors of various clubs is rarely contingent on a spatial factor as a restraint to sustainable links.

In this manner, the majority of the informants in the study consider horizontal networking between the clubs, including cooperation, support and information exchange as indispensible ingredients—a relational principle that bolsters development of this

sport. A research participant active in a club in the south of Serbia indicates the following:

> This is an amateur sport and there is a lot of affection, love for the sport, and there are a number of contacts [between the clubs] and, what's more important, these contacts are regular … I think that we cooperate very well … it depends on the club, but in essence they are all nice and it [cooperation] is very satisfactory. (I2.4)

Similarly, a focus group participant, GI2.2.2, active in a club based in Belgrade, argues that 'there is cooperation and information exchange [between the clubs]. I have daily communication with other clubs, with people that govern other clubs, and I have very good and healthy cooperation with these people'.

The scope of networking between different clubs in rugby league is enlarged by the breaking down of barriers in cooperation between the various competition levels and leagues that particular clubs belong to, which simultaneously extends and thickens communication channels. As suggested by the relevant respondents (e.g. I2.9; I2.10; I2.13; I2.15), previously or currently active in the Student League, in addition to regular contact and exchanges employed within the Student League, communication channels developed with the clubs from the First, Second and Third divisions are well exercised, fostering development of the sport at multiple levels. Still, the relatively small size of the rugby league community, including members of the governing structures within clubs and the SRLF, who often hold multiple roles in this context, enables the development and sustainability of regular, informal horizontal relational exchanges, particularly motivated by the collective goal—that of the development of this sport in Serbia. Although the scope of networking encapsulates all of the clubs within the rugby league, relation strategies between particular clubs, notably those pivotal in rugby league development, are characterised by diminished employment of communication practices and coordination on developmental issues relevant to the entire rugby league organisation. As reported, personal and sporting hostilities, reflected in moderate networking are most notable in interrelations between two rival rugby league clubs, *Dorćol* and *Crvena Zvezda* (Red Star) (e.g. GI2.2; I2.1;I2.9; I2.14; I2.15). Still, as suggested by certain actors from the above clubs, these rivalries tend to be overcome for the sake of mutual developmental aims (I2.9; GI2.2.2). Interestingly, however, the respondents further testify that the symbolic polarisation between these two clubs is transmitted to principles of networking and cooperation throughout the entire pool of rugby league clubs in Serbia, weakening or causing ruptures in this layer of the networking structure. In support of this argument, research participant GI2.2.2 declares

the following: 'We [*Dorćol* and *Crvena Zvezda*] are rival clubs, and usually those clubs that were supported by *Dorćol* [or *Crvena Zvezda*], they are ultimately loyal to them [the supporter]'. The reason behind this symbolic loyalty and these divisions is, in part, underpinned by the distribution of positions, and thus the multiple positions some actors hold in the SRLF and the clubs, and the attempts by 'others' to change this model of organisation:

> There are misunderstandings and disagreements […] because some people want their part in all this [the development of rugby league and participation in the SRLF] and they haven't got it, while others want too much and they already have it. (I2.17)

Moreover, symbolic loyalty to particular clubs in opposing positions within the organisation is induced by the expectation of continued support and the better positioning within the organisation of 'loyal' clubs (GI2.2; I2.15; I2.17).

On the other hand, the factor that softens the above symbolic divides and increases networking among clubs is the sharing of participation in the national rugby league team on the part of the opponent clubs. In this vein, one of the interviewees argues the following: 'The people that are in the national team are really good friends, they know each other best … and *Crvena Zvezda* sent eight players to the national team, *Dorćol* seven and this is half of the team' (I2.2). Moreover, participation in the national team in general fosters informal, denser networking among clubs' members, contributing to a greater level of cohesion in the entire rugby league organisation, as is borne out by the interviewees (I2.2; I2.7; I2.12). This issue will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Finally, the extent to which and the ways in which internal networking within rugby league is developed may be portrayed through active engagement in the channels of communication between the SRLF and the governing structures of the clubs. With the exception of two, GI2.2 and I2.14, all research participants highlighted that the relational principal developed between these two entities represents channels through which exchange of different sorts of developmental resources (information, knowledge, material assets, access to facilities, institutional access and the like) and support is exercised on a regular basis. These exchanges are of an informal character and are often based on an intersection between support founded on friendship and the strong dedication to rugby league development in Serbia exhibited by the SRLF and clubs. As interviewee I2.2 states: 'There will never be a barrier blocking the club–the Federation relationship, there will always be someone to support you'. In contrast, certain

hostilities between the clubs indicated earlier do transfer to the ways in which the SRLF and the particular clubs network. As argued by group interview participant, GI2.2, the main reason for the reduced extent of networking and cooperation in the above regard was rooted in multiple or conflicting governing roles that particular individuals held within the Federation and their home club. But it also may represent a struggle over symbolic and actual power within rugby league organisational structures. Still, the case for extensive informal networking, cooperation and support through established relationship channels along club—SRLF lines, is overwhelmingly developed.

External Networking

The extent to which the rugby league networks externally, and the type of links developed between the SRLF, including the clubs, as well as external institutional and community agents, has a part to play in the social capital model created in and around this sport. In that regard, external links are established with: 1) local and national government representatives; 2) schools and the UoB; 3) the media; 4) sponsors and donors; 5) other sports; 6) non-sport non-governmental organisations and 7) international rugby league organisations.

Similarly to the GFP, vertical modes of cooperation and networking established with the LSGs and state institutions in charge of sport development considerably rely on informal, dense, often politically forged personal relations and the individual interests of the parties involved. While these patterns of connections frequently occur at the local level, between the clubs and the LSGs, the interplay between the state institutions and the SRLF however, comprises increased degrees of formality, albeit the elements of informal semi-dense interactions that have been shown to exist. As a demonstration of the predominant manner of interaction between local rugby league clubs and local self-government representatives, interviewee I2.2 who recently registered a new club comments with a nod:

> I was there [at the LSG] using some of my personal contacts […]. So the first contact there was with a lady from a certain political party so that she could arrange things for me [and the club] because I know another person there who is great and is willing to do things for the club and the local community. But two things here should be distinguished. There are people [in LSGs] who want to do something for you on the basis of friendship no matter what, and there are people who want to set aside 30 percent of their influence and time to help somebody for the sake of the local community […]. There is a problem because everything is split between the political parties. So if you have good relations with someone from the leading political party, you will be okay, and if you don't, you should try to be good with someone in power— these are terrible things.

Researcher: So the influence of politics is dominant in some way?

I2.2: Yes, it is huge. But if you position your club well … but this takes ages. *Dorćol*, for example, positioned itself well in their local community and they don't have any problems. Their local self-government recognises them; okay … they have some friends there, contacts based on friendship.

Comments of this sort were very common and underline the fact that the networking experience of many local clubs representatives with LSGs is strongly dependent on a plethora of individual interests, either political or financial, including friendship as an informal channel for local institutional support. Although LSG's support for the clubs is 'officially' dependent on local sport development strategies, comprising the evaluation of projects submitted by clubs, the underlying system of cooperation is free from the formally enacted modes that local self-government is entitled to employ. Research participant I2.9, involved in the work of the SRLF, indicates that due to the local context clubs operate in, the SRLF sometimes needs to step into the political facilitation of relationships between clubs and LSG: 'You know, everywhere … but the south of Serbia is completely in the dark. We need to come down south and to call on our political connections to get some rights for the clubs'. In addition, there are indications, albeit minor, that traces of formal and weak networking with the LSGs may be achieved by means of an active approach by club representatives in promoting clubs initiatives as beneficial for the community, excluding the employment of personal contacts in the facilitation of the above matters (I2.17).

Yet, irrespective of the type of interactions developed with LSGs, stocks of external networking of rugby league at the local level indicate a considerable volume of active involvement in networking practices by members of the rugby league organisation.

On the other hand, there has been large scale agreement that networking with the representatives of *state institutions* is more of a formal and weak character and, in some respects, dependent on the fulfilment of formal criteria required in communication with these institutions, while dynamics of these contacts is deemed to be frequent. In that regard, the high-ranking official from the Ministry of Youth and Sport asserts:

We have been working to make a less bureaucratic system, I am not a classic high ranking state official whom people should notify and request meetings with in advance. People here [in the Ministry] come and go and if the Federations have any problem, they come here first and we try to solve it. We phone each other … and then we make some kind of agreement. […] I am personally very satisfied with our relationships with the Federations. (I3.3)

Representatives of the SRLF have confirmed the above indication, while one has added that although links established with state institutions were at first characterised by a greater degree of formality, with time those links took on a certain degree of informal exchanges (I2.9). Correspondingly, regular contacts and semi-informal links resulted in greater recognition of the work results of the SRLF, directly impacting further institutional support (I2.7; I2.9). Additionally, it is indispensible to note that vertical links established with state institutional agents are not limited only to the Ministry in charge of sport development, they extend to the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior through SRLF engagement in rugby league development within the army and the police forces, thus, increasing the volume of networks established with state institutions. As argued by SRLF and club officials (I2.3; I2.7; I2.9; I2.18), the links established with the above institutions correspond to the model of networking employed with the state institutions directly in charge of sport. In addition, formal, weak ties feature sporadic networking with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development through which formal cooperation with high schools and University bodies was established in order to extend outreach programmes of the rugby league (I2.9; I2.13). In this way, the entire rugby league organisation benefits from the social ties forged in pursuit of specific developmental goals (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003). Yet, the positions within the University's governing structures of the key actors in the development of the Student League induced regular networking among faculties of the UoB and cooperation with the bodies concerned with sport development at the University. In that vein, interviewee I2.13 indicates: 'As a Student Vice Dean I had access to the Dean of the Faculty and the rest of the structures at the faculty […] and, for instance, the Dean helped us when we needed a training pitch'. Thus, active participation of rugby league members in formal networks at the University facilitated further development through the stocks of social capital created.

Furthermore, the relative developmental infancy of this sport in Serbia and its scarce recognition in the wider public would presumably require extensive application of outreach practices, including external linking with the media, and the sponsors and/or donors.

Yet, in contrast to the links established with educational institutions so as to extend the outreach radius of this sport, networking with *media* representatives shows sporadic, less committed and rather informal, contextually swayed connectivity character. Interviewee I2.1 describes relationships with the media as follows:

> The majority of articles concerning emerging sports are on the back of newspapers or in some cases the articles will be published only if you pay for it… But the issue with emerging sports is either paying for the article to be published or having a good friend who works in the media or someone who trained in this sport and now works in the media and is eager to publish articles on this.

Similarly, research participant I2.9 states: 'Well, we did manage to have a small article published on a weekly basis in a newspaper and this was done through one journalist who writes for that newspaper'. Hence, the relative closure and clientelistic practices of the media in the case of relationships with the rugby league, including calculation of benefits and drawbacks from greater media exposure by rugby league representatives (GI2.2) led to rather insignificantly developed networking along the above external lines. Additionally, an extensive search for media reports on rugby league in Serbia led the researcher to conclude that media exposure of this sport is considerably paltry in nature, showing that amongst others, networking practices with the media required further extension if they are to bear outreach-related results.

Consequently, relating with the *sponsors* in rugby league has rarely resulted in contracting relationships between the representatives of these two entities. The relationships established in that regard were almost incidental and, where developed, were usually based on personal recognition, affection for the sport or a particular club on the part of sponsors, being mostly semi-informal or informal in character (I2.2; I2.3; I2.5; I2.9; GI2.2). Research participant I2.2 illustrates this in the following manner:

> There is something but … you know how these things go … and some sponsors want to invest because this is *Crvena Zvezda*—he likes *Crvena Zvezda* or his child plays there, or some foreigners want to invest … *Crvena Zvezda* is a recognisable brand. In *Dorćol* … well they have some personal contacts, someone, some friends who want to invest something on a monthly basis.

Although this type of external networking is fairly underdeveloped due to a number of factors, including the developmental stage of the sport, its amateur nature, and unfavourable legislative regulations for potential sponsorship to be enacted (I2.3), relating with local donors eager to engage in local community development through sport in the form of local support networks is, according to the accounts of research respondents, emerging (I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.7; I2.9; I2.11; I2.14; GI2.2). This confirms the existence of networks of support or 'social capital of solidarity' previously referred to in this study (Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin et al., 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011), inherent in differing relational structures forged in the context of Serbian society. In essence, these external links are embedded in rather strong and informal contacts, motivated by friendship support and individual eagerness for local community

development, notably represented in the local clubs whose surrounding community is 'labelled' as an incubator of 'local patriotism'. Networking within the local community through informal membership in the *Dorćol* supporters' club previously discussed in this study (see Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2) represents an example of informal bridging with the wider local community.

The way in which rugby league further extends external networks of connections relates to cooperation, and the exchange of resources with *other sports* in the local community, including membership in the same sport societies.[12] These networks are predominantly established with local football clubs, or American football clubs, and rooted in the exchange of shared sporting facilities (I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.5; I2.6; I2.9; I2.11; I2.12; I2.13; I2.14; I2.17). Interviewee 2.11 referrers to cooperation with other sports as follows:

> There is cooperation between rugby league and football in most cases and an example of this cooperation is the Dorćol Sports Society, which was established due to the engagement of the rugby league club, the football club and the handball club. But, again, an even better example of this cooperation is in the provinces, outside Belgrade […] where clubs have to train on the football pitch of the local football club […] So without this kind of cooperation rugby league would probably disappear tomorrow, it couldn't work anymore because of the lack of infrastructure.

While provision of resources in the form of facilities from the side of football clubs is based on support through local sporting communities, the exchange of administrative 'know how' represents a resource that rugby league members provide to football clubs (I2.3; I2.9; I2.11). Moreover, cooperation between emerging sports in the local community—rugby league and American football for instance—is reflected in sporting and local solidarity practices:

> We, from Zemun, started cooperation with an American football club. We've been at their match as security staff to help them not have to pay for that, and they will come to our match as well. We use their equipment, they use ours, this is not a problem. (I2.12)

Clearly, the informants' accounts suggest that these links are based on informal relational exchanges that are regular in nature.

Moreover, the degree to which this sport externally networks with the community is reflected in its active involvement in projects pursued in cooperation with non-sport NGOs active in the domain of social responsibility nationally and locally. Although the participation of rugby league clubs and the SRLF in the work of non-governmental organisations, as a partner or a beneficiary, is in an early phase, dependent on in-club

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[12] *Crvena Zvezda* (Red Star*)* rugby league club is a member of the Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) Sport Society, while *Dorćol* and *Radnički* are respectively members of the Dorćol Sport Society and Radnički Sport Society.

individual decisions rather than on a strategic approach to communicate with representatives of the NGO sector at the level of the rugby organisation as a whole, it tends to be extended and accepted among an increasing number of rugby league actors in Serbia (GI2.2). Informant I2.4, who is active in governing a club from a southern Serbian province, explains close cooperation with the non-governmental sector as follows:

> We have a very good relationship with one NGO and each year they donate presents for the New Year to kids with intellectual disabilities and we are … our rugby club is involved in this activity for two years in a row now and I hope this will continue. We've been buying them notebooks, T-shirts and everything in order to help them.

Similarly, members of the *Crvena Zvezda* club actively participate in the 'Budi muško' (Be a Man) initiative, implemented by the non-governmental organisation Centre E8, aimed at increasing awareness among junior and cadet rugby league players about issues such as violence prevention in sport and in general, gender equality, healthy life-styles and community activism (Centre E8, 2012, 2013; GI2.2; I2.10; I2.12; I3.4). This engagement clearly enables the creation of bridging networks that are weaker in nature, between sport and non-sport communities, locally, nationally and regionally. Therefore, it is notable that there is an intersection of types of social ties forged by the interaction with the non-governmental sector and reflected in the 'multistrandedness' of formal, semi-formal and informal networks, which with time tend to display characteristics of dense and regular exchanges (GI2.2.2; I3.4). The significance of participation in the above initiatives seen in the context of the objectives of this study will be further elaborated on in the thematic sections of the next chapter.

Finally, the establishment of formal, weak social networks is achieved through the application of the SRLF's cooperational strategies with international rugby league actors. However, in contrast to modes of international cooperation developed by the GFP, formal networking with the Rugby League European Federation (RLEF), for example, tends to be substituted by less formal social relations as a result of the involvement of Serbian rugby league actors in the activities of the RLEF (e.g. I2.3; I2.9; GI2.2). In support of the above argument, respondent I2.9 states: 'We have great cooperation with the RLEF, we are now a full member. We contributed big time to the overall [regional] development'. Similarly, when asked about international cooperation with rugby league bodies, participant I2.3 stated: 'It is good, of course, when we have our man in the RLEF Board as a full member', which implies more informal and dense relationships established with the RLEF through facilitation of 'our man'. Additionally,

the SRLF officials active in regional rugby league development acted as 'structural holes bridgers' between the rugby league federations in the region of Southeast and Central Europe (I2.9; I2.3), which consequently increased the number of external networks developed and, hence, increased stocks of social capital. On the other hand, the capacity of the clubs to extend the scope of their international networking is fairly limited and, where existent, it is based on the individual, informal connections of club members (GI2.2). Yet, as indicated during the interviews, there is a certain degree of control over international networking by clubs and ownership of information on international links by key actors within the SRLF (GI2.2; I2.4; I2.15; I2.14), which can be seen as a preventive factor in the clubs' international external networking, including a shortfall in the capacity of club members to overcome these barriers.

In sum, in line with Putnam's and Feldstein's assertions, the 'multistrandedness' of social networks is exactly what characterises the dynamic processes of intersection and the overlapping of network types and circles (2003) within and around rugby league. Yet, with prevailing informal and dense relational exchanges employed both internally and externally. While this result generally corresponds with networking practices developed by those involved in the GFP, it suggests that, rugby league as an organisation has fostered the development of an increased number of external networks and stronger internal ties characterised by developed resource exchange practices.

6.3.2 The Significance of Trust and Reciprocity for the Development of Social Capital in and through Rugby League

The search for answers on questions of the cultural elements of social capital in rugby league, on the types and levels of trust and norms reciprocity developed in internal and external inter-relational structures, including factors that contribute to the creation of particular levels and types of trust and reciprocity, has yielded intriguing dynamics and nature of results. While the majority of informants indicated that both inner, and trust developed along external lines reside at low levels featuring a particularised character, the norms of reciprocity appear to be markedly developed, displaying both a generalised and a particularised nature. Moreover, while the factors that determine the levels and types of trust include the length of engagement in a particular network of relations, results achieved, individual reputations, transparent governance practices and provided assistance in the domain of external linking, norms of reciprocity are contingent on the contribution to a collective aim—that of rugby league development.

According to the majority of respondents' accounts, the scale of *inner trust* that circulates within the rugby league organisation is narrow and particularised in character, yet has shown increasing potential in the recent past. In support of this interpretation, respondent I2.3 indicates that:

> There is trust, but sometimes there have been disappointments. […] [this] is like everywhere else, there is trust but sometimes it happens that someone wants to break your legs. Therefore, you need to be careful. But this environment of ours, we, who are together our whole lives, the trust there is at a very high level.

In partial agreement with the above indication about inner trust, research participant I2.15 declares the following: 'You know, this is a small community [rugby league] and there is still low trust […] and, me personally, I don't have much trust [in others in rugby league]'. While the majority of respondents have confirmed the above sentiments (I2.1; I2.3; I2.4; I2.5; I2.7; I2.9; GI2.2; I2.10; I2.14; I2.15; I2.17; I2.18), research participants GI2.2.1 and I2.3 have asserted that although trust does reside at lower levels in rugby league, there is a trend of it increasing recently.

Likewise, interviewees' comments about the notion of trust suggest particularisation in the relational practices at all three levels of inner interactions—in-club, between clubs and between the clubs and the SRLF. Referring to in-club relationships, one of the interviewees states the following:

> You can't trust everybody. I mean this is terrible, but … I trust that the players will play how it is requested, but I don't trust them all equally, this differs … but generally off the pitch, this is difficult … there are individuals I trust to, I have better relations with … but it depends on the particular individual. (I2.4)

In a similar manner, informants I2.2, GI2.2.1, GI2.2.2, I2.11, I2.13, I2.14 and I2.18 suggest that trust developed along the SRLF–clubs line is strictly dependent on the heritage of individual personal relations created between actors active in these two entities.

Trust is a dynamic relational category. The levels and types of inner trust, as reported, are frequently dependent on the time of engagement in the network of relations, commitment to the sport and results achieved in its development, as well as individual reputations, as noted earlier. For example, interviewee I2.13, long active in the development of this sport, suggests that 'the more you play and cooperate with someone the greater the degree of trust develops between the parties'. Moreover, while research participant I2.5 indicates that 'trust is built on achieved [developmental] ideas […] and when you see that someone is trying hard to achieve something', suggesting that the

role of commitment is relevant to the development of increasing levels of trust, informants I2.7 and GI2.2.2 have stressed that keeping promises at all times is what gradually impacts the dynamic nature of trust, which corresponds with the issue of reputation as an element that may contribute to the augmentation of trust within a particular relational category.

In a similar fashion, while trust developed *externally*, between the rugby league organisation, its entities, and particular external stakeholders, is generally low, the factors that influence the levels and types of trust in these institutions involve weak and dense established personal relations, good governance, reputation and work results, as well as wider contextual factors in which a particular network operates.

Therefore, trust created in vertical connections between the rugby league and the local and national institutional agents—including the media, sponsors and/or donors and the wider local community (other sports and local residents in general), is according to the majority of interview respondents, deficient. This is mostly due to a lack of transparency, and the dominance of personal and political interests in these relations. Research participant I2.10, while stating that trust in sport institutional agents, media, donors and sponsors is generally low, indicates that only functional, thick personal relations with representatives of the above institutions can contribute to increased trust. This suggests a particularisation of relations as a means to create and increase the stocks of trust. Moreover, while suggesting low levels of trust developed in relations with the aforementioned stakeholders, interviewee I2.9 bitterly comments about the major contextual factors that led to a decrease in trust at the local and national level:

> The whole system is badly made and that's why nobody trusts [anybody else]. There was a workshop organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sport related to good governance practices in sport, and it was a complete disaster. A man stood and said to the lecturer: 'Madam, I would like to explain how this works in practice—what's our and what's your percentage'. And that means giving and taking money. And then you get shocked when you experience this at the micro level … That's why there is no [trust] … and we're trying to fight this but it is very difficult, and this is especially very difficult in the south of Serbia.

However, while there is agreement among the majority of research participants that trust in LSG is scarce, there are indications that levels of trust in the national sports institution, the Ministry of Youth and Sport, are augmenting lately due to the increased recognition and reputation of this sport within the Ministry. In that regard, interviewee I2.2 stresses the following:

> The Ministry is doing good things, now I don't know if it is to their full potential, but they are doing things, even when some budget funds remain at the end of the year they

announce a call for proposals and you can apply again, and then with the help of some contacts from there you can get some info on your chances to win and get some funds. I trust them, they're putting some effort in there.

While this sentiment is not dominant among the research participants—only confirmed in another five cases (I2.1; I2.3; I2.4; I2.7; I2.9)—it may indicate the rising trust in the above institution, dependent on support for this sport, work results achieved and individual relations established with the institutional agents.

Furthermore, struggles to identify the levels of trust in the networks of relations with the wider local community have been immanent to discussions about this element of social capital. For example, respondent I2.9 attests that there is a very low level of trust developed along the line between parents of junior players and the clubs: 'There is no trust from the side of parents, no trust … parents don't trust that we're going to do something, that we'll get some funding, where membership fees go'. Still, long-lasting personal relations in the local community, in the form of a supporters' club or membership in the sport society, for example, contribute to increased levels of trust in these network constellations (ibid.).

Finally, unlike levels of trust developed locally and nationally, trust in actors in networks of relations at the international level is deemed to be fairly well developed and circumscribed by recognition, investment in the Serbian rugby league and the delegation of authorities to the SRLF to develop the sport regionally (I2.3; I2.7; I2.9; I2.10). Still, due to the narrow character of the rugby league community, both nationally and internationally, the trust that permeates these networks is limited to the 'who I know personally' category. Albeit on a small scale, the case for extension of the levels of trust lies in interactions through formal networks of connections with the non-sport NGO sector. Though it is of a mostly particularised character, there are slight indications of elements of social trust creation in these relational structures (GI2.2, I2.4; I2.7).

Social or generalised trust, including political trust, is according to Putnam, the key to extending the radius of trust in the community and, thus, community social capital (2000). Furthermore, social trust, as observed by the same author, can be created through participation in different social networks, whether formal or informal. Yet, in the scope of internal and external interactions and intersections of networks within and through rugby league in the context of Serbia, the dominant particularised or thick trust created rarely translates to social and/or political trust. In other words, mechanisms for the creation of trust are greatly dependent on the roster of people 'who I personally

know'. On the other hand, however, there are indirect indicators for the development of generalised trust within rugby league by means of membership in the organisation. Namely, various demographics, including the varied social backgrounds of rugby league members previously discussed, portray the spontaneous dedication to inclusiveness or the exorcising of 'otherness', which is enabled through a key identity marker, that of belonging to the rugby league community (I2.5; I2.13; I3.4), which suggests that through membership in this organisation an extension of the radius of generalised trust can possibly be achieved.

As previously elicited, *norms of reciprocity* within and around rugby league show an independent trend and typology in relation to the modes and levels of trust as social capital constituents. The key factor that continuously impacts the extension of levels of reciprocity internally as well as externally is a/the contribution to rugby league development matters.

Firstly, the majority of interviewees highlighted that mutual support and assistance practices are strongly indicative to this sport, independent from notions of particularisation or individualisation. Thus, the creation of stocks of generalised norms of reciprocity is what gradually comes to characterise the relationships imbued in internally forged rugby league networks. Thus, participant GI2.2.1 states: 'We are doing this and we would like that our club is better off, but I do not plan to make a living out of my engagement in rugby, I want to help other people in the club […] it is important to support, to help'. Similarly, in-club support among the members is present as a principle of relationships:

> We are helping each other because the club has had financial problems and someone contributes more, someone less, depending on their individual situation, and we are aware of these individual abilities for contribution, so we help each other […] and the good thing in rugby is that people want to help, to transfer knowledge and this is highly represented in this sport. (I2.10)

Or as interviewee I2.4 indicates, referring to in-club activities, which equally correspond with wider local community engagement and support: 'We often help Roma minority players in our club … Every time we have some things, clothes we bring them … senior players have often been bringing those things for them. Of course, whatever we can do to help, we do'.

Correspondingly, most of the evidence collected on reciprocal practices suggests that networks established between clubs, including the SRLF, are featured with considerable levels of generalised reciprocity.

> People are so enthusiastic and so eager to help when there is some newly established club, they all instantly want to contribute … by any means, either in organisational matters or through the provision of human resources. As an example, *Crvena Zvezda* played a friendly match with a newly established club in Banja Luka, *Crvena Zvezda* went there to develop rugby. Then the coach and the captain of *Novi Beograd* [a club] plays for the Banja Luka team, as well as the captain and the coach from *Radnički Nova Pazova*. They go there and play for that new club […] And then these types of relations contribute to when you call someone from another club and say: 'I have such and such a problem, can you help me with advice or in any other way?' and he says: 'yes, of course'—these are just great things. (I2.2)

The above sentiment was often repeated by a clear majority of interviewees in this case study. In the same vein, as was frequently asserted by the informants, the SRLF assists all the clubs within the organisation via the application of generalised assistance principles: 'We help and support all clubs either financially or by providing them with coaches … or in any other way' (I2.7). Analogously, a club representative stresses that: 'Rugby league clubs are generously supported by the Federation. I think that this is not the case in other sports. […] And the Federation assists us in administrative matters— this is a huge help' (I2.2). Yet, in the minority, two interview respondents disagreed with the above views. Namely, according to their sentiments, reciprocity practices are poorly developed and, if developed, they display particularisation (I2.14; I2.15).

On the other hand, two facets of reciprocation exist within the framework of external networking. While ample stocks of generalised norms of reciprocity are created in interactions with the majority of external stakeholders—other sports; local community actors, such as local donors and the wider local community; NGOs; national institutional agents; and regional rugby league bodies—networking with the LSGs and the media often involves circulation of particularised norms of reciprocity.

Thus, mutual support between sports in the local community is inherent to cooperational practices created around rugby league:

> We helped our local football club a lot, and we helped people [involved in various sports] a lot, here in Dorćol, but [we helped] the football club the most. Also, with American football, some clubs hold training together so as to lower the costs of renting facilities. (I2.3)

Furthermore, as interviewee I2.2 utters, contributions to and from local community actors are reflected in the following practices:

> For example, a guy from the laundry from my neighbourhood always wants to help by lowering the price when I give him our equipment and this is great. […] But we … our club is eager to help. Just now we're organising a match in Zvečan [a local community in northern Kosovo] and will bring them some humanitarian aid as well.

Likewise, although developed on weaker grounds, norms of reciprocity established through networking with the previously listed national institutional agents, reveal a generalised nature. In particular, the contribution of rugby league to sport development at the UoB has initiated support from the relevant University bodies in charge of sport promotion (I2.3; I2.10; I2.13). Ultimately, international and regional rugby league cooperation, as portrayed by the research participants, is based on strong inclinations to reciprocate for the sake of sport development:

> We have contributed much to the development [of rugby league]. We used funds that we [the SRLF] got to help others. We helped a lot with development in Hungary, Republika Srpska and in Greece. We are trying our best to be a leader in the region and to transfer our knowledge to others. Just now the Moroccan Federation has sent two men over to learn from us. (I2.9)

Yet again, according to a vast number of research participants, where employed, links with LSGs and the media are filled with expectations to reciprocate in a particular manner. As an illustration, participant I2.15 stated that, in order to be provided with some assistance from LSG, one is expected to become a member of the political party in power locally. Or, as another interviewee has it:

> For instance, in southern Serbia, one of our players got a scholarship to study at the Faculty of Sports and he was obliged to go and to vote there for the ruling party in that local authority. If he didn't do that he would be seen as someone who didn't do what was needed to be done. (I2.9)

In addition, reciprocal relations with the media result in no support unless paid for or based on friendship relations (I2.1; I2.3; I2.9; I2.10; I2.13; GI2.2; I2.14).

Irrespective of whether internally or externally developed, at the core of generalised reciprocity practices is dedication to sport development, including a strong affection and devotion to this sport: 'when you love something, you don't count on returns, you want to do something for that sport' (I2.20). Additionally, norms of reciprocity developed in this sport are embedded in the positive individual development rugby league has contributed to: 'There is a player who is key to one of the teams and the national team as well, who was growing up in a very, very bad neighbourhood and it was rugby that saved him … and definitely rugby helped him and he helped rugby' (I2.5). This indication of rugby's potential to affect positive individual development, which in turn affects devotion to the development of rugby has often been referred to throughout the

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interview phase of this research (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.5; I2.7; GI2.2; I2.9; I2.12; I2.13; I2.15; I2.16; I2.17).

The presented evidence on the levels and types of cultural social capital elements shows a mutual mismatching nature. This is, according to the findings of this study, contingent on different factors and motives that impact the creation and modelling of the above elements. Yet, circles of intersection between these types of social capital elements exist and are notably reflected in networks created with local institutional agents featuring particularisation in relational practices. Ultimately, the position of norms of reciprocity in the constellation of the social capital cultural elements appears to be dominant in the current context of emerging sport case study.

6.3.3 The Social Capital Model for Emerging Sport: The Road to Bridging?

Building upon results of the structural and cultural social capital elements in the domain of emerging sport, dynamic patterns of connection are explored in this section in an attempt to construct a model for social capital in and around this sport.

While a comprehensive outlook on the pool of evidence obtained in this case study suggests that flows of bonding, bridging and linking social capital are represented in and around this sport, the share of the forms of social capital, including the levels, circulating in particular networks established internally and externally, determines the particular nature and, hence, the model of social capital. By the same token, it is indispensible to account for the dynamic and transformative nature of social capital in the particular social contexts that change over time (Numerato, 2011; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Spaaij, 2011).

If fragmented internally, the outlook for social capital at the level of rugby league clubs, between clubs and also the SRLF, shows a dynamic fluctuation along the bonding-bridging axis yet in different proportions depending on the particular internal micro relational context. Therefore, types of networks, norms of reciprocity and trust developed—informal, thick networks of connections, particularised trust and generalised norms of reciprocity—facilitate the creation of prevailingly *bonding* social capital reproduced in relationships established at the level of *in-club* interconnections. Still, an analysis of the main elements of social capital shows that a clear distinction between theoretically determined types of social capital is not fully feasible, as bonding social capital intersects with bridging, in the domain of norms of reciprocity developed

in the above context, instilling a third cross-cutting common space between both types of social capital. In the above relations, therefore, norms of reciprocity act as a facilitator or transformative agent on the bonding-bridging axis. On the other hand, the issue of the relative closure of networks within clubs, including the SRLF, towards newcomers, for instance, is indicative of the creation of bonding social capital: 'Well there are rivalries and animosities among players, especially if you come to the club as a new player. There is always some kind of initiation […] but you get accepted after a while' (I2.17). While the issue of the acceptance of newcomers has been repeatedly indicated during interviews, it has been equally suggested that once the distinctive 'rugby league player' identity marker is created the barriers for acceptance melt away (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.5; I2.6; I2.7; I2.9; GI2.2; I2.10; I2.12; I2.15; I2.16; I2.18). In that regard, interviewee I2.13 sees the issue of identity in rugby league as follows: 'You're first a rugby player, and then you're a man or whatever else'. Thus, although the 'multistrandeness' of identities, including various demographic profiles and social backgrounds is represented in the internal networks of relations, theoretically suggesting the creation of fertile ground for bridging across 'unlikeness', belonging to rugby and the mastery of the game are among the factors through which inner bonding social capital is created. Consistent with arguments presented by Vermeulen and Verweel (2009) and Coalter (2010), it can be argued that, if seen in this way, bonding social capital affects inclusiveness, contributing to the acceptance of the 'different other', contingent to the 'rugby player' identity marker.

Moreover, a strong dedication to achieve advances in the Serbian sporting scene is immanent to processes of the removal of barriers for inclusion that exist generally in both the sporting and wider social context in Serbia (I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.5; I2.9). Specifically, the inclusion of the Roma minority, one of the most deprived in Serbia, in one of the clubs structures, expanded the prospects for bridging across boundaries of 'otherness', again reinforced by bringing the relevance of created 'rugby league belonging' identity markers to the fore.

Furthermore, vibrant cooperation established through interplay with different entities within the rugby league organisation—the clubs themselves and the SRLF—displays a circulation of generalised norms of reciprocity fostered via the provision of mutual support for sport development in informally pursued dense, and at the same time, weak relational practices as discussed in the previous sections. Likewise, in addition to established informal and dense networks and considering the fact that trust created is

scarce and of a rather particularised nature, reflection of bonding social capital proves to be present in the above constellations. Yet, as highlighted by interviewees in this case study, norms of mutual support and generalised reciprocity outweigh trust on the scale of cultural social capital elements, fostering the creation of bridges across different sized lacunas in rugby league relational structures, a process, which is additionally reinforced by the facilitating role exercised by the SRLF (I2.2; I2.3; I2.4: I2.5; I2.6; I2.7; I2.8; I2.9; I2.10; I2.11; I2.12; I 2.13; I2.16; I2.17; I2.18; I2.20). This may suggest that in this context, irrespective of the types and levels of trust developed and the degree of formality or informality of networks created, bridges are constructed along the generalised support for the common goal—that of the sport development. Thus, the common developmental goal, including matching identities in the domain of rugby culture and its community, may forge the creation of wider inner bridging social capital, because a 'focus on similarities may be an important aspect of bridging, just as it is of bonding' (Spaaij, 2011: 94).

Although common sport developmental goals and rugby related identities foster inner bridging processes, the existing polarisation of clubs around the *Dorćol* and *Crvena Zvezda* divide on the other hand, bolstering processes of bonding social capital generation (e.g. GI2.2). Complex relations over symbolic power positions are concentrated around the domination of these actors in maintaining the general developmental aims of this sport and the support provided to other clubs with this goal in mind. In addition, the conflict is further nurtured by the multiplication of conflicting positions that certain actors in these networks have taken on. Still, as a dynamic and transformative developmental resource, the lack of bridges in relations between these opposing clubs is compensated by engagement in the national team as well as by involvement in the Student League development, which *inter alia*, act as a cohesive factor in the inner, inter-organisational networking. In addition, reweaving social webs will depend in part on the efforts of the leaders in the organisation 'who choose to pursue their goals […] through the sometimes slow, frequently fractious, and profoundly transformative route of social capital building' (Putnam and Feldstein 2003: 294). It follows, hence, that divisions, amongst others, rooted in the multiplied positions that some rugby league actors hold, should be prevented by key figures in the rugby league, allowing for an open entrance into management structures so as to reweave social lattices in the organisation for the sport's developmental ends.

Furthermore, the mission to develop sport through social engineering externally, outside the immediate rugby league community, has fostered the generation of stocks of *bridging* and *linking* social capital for this sport and the wider local community. In contrast to Seippel's suggestions about the inability of sport organisations (in western social contexts) to link externally (2008), rugby league in Serbia has succeeded in creating a breadth of formal and informal networks characterised by both particularised and generalised norms of reciprocity and trust. This additionally indicates that levels of social capital, or the resources for development accruing from it, are cumulative (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003). Namely, engagement in social relations with other sports, donors and/or sponsors, NGOs, the media and international and regional rugby league bodies conceptually suggests the creation of bridging social capital available to multiple communities engaged in the networks. Yet, variances in the structural and cultural social capital characteristics built through these social relations should be comprehended in line with the dynamic and transformative character of social capital in general. That is to say, while the dominant theoretical debate around bridging social capital is concentrated on issues of generalised norms or reciprocity and trust that circulates through mostly formal relational channels, the evidence from this particular study shows that bridging externally can be achieved through both informal and formal networks and can include both particularised and generalised norms of reciprocity in the particular sporting and wider local contexts (see Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2). Consequently, external relations exist at the intersection of bonding and bridging social capital when considered beyond the scope of 'external' connectivity, while including a qualitative dimension in these interactions.

Thus, at the heart of networking with other sports, sponsors and/or local donors, are informal relations characterised by generalised reciprocity and particularised trust, established for mutual sport and local developmental ends. Clearly, while in this context, bridges are extended to the wider local community scope, still they are featured with elements of bonding social capital embedded in informal networking, often based on friendship and particularised trust. Yet, norms of generalised reciprocity exercised through these connections open up space for increased engagement in the community, serving mutual interests, thus developing elements of bridging social capital, or more precisely, the hybrid type of social capital residing at the intersection of bridging and bonding domains. Moreover, as the research results suggest, relating with NGOs outside the realm of sport and international and regional rugby league organisations, alters the

map of social capital typology previously developed in the literature. The fluctuating character of social capital is, hence, portrayed through transitions from the formal to the informal and thicker relational practices, including generalised norms of reciprocity, residing in the overlap between bridging and bonding social capital (e.g. GI2.2; I2.4; I2.9). These findings are opposed to what Burt calls 'relational decay', or the tendency of relations weakening over time (2005: 197). On the other hand, however, the above external relational pattern is not applicable to links established with representatives of the media. Although bridging across social strata, this relational pattern displays a bonding nature based on particular relational exchanges (e.g. I2.1; I2.3; I2.9).

Networking vertically with the state and local self-government institutional agents in order to leverage the flow of resources (Talbot and Walker, 2007; Woolcock, 1998, 2001) for sport development (Coalter, 2007) is, as discussed previously, represented through *linking* social capital. Drawing on the research results about structural and cultural social capital components developed in the interplay between rugby league officials and the LSGs, it may be argued that in this case, as in the GFP, linking social capital demonstrates elements of a bonding character. Namely, as repeatedly underlined by the interviewees, scarce levels of particularised trust and norms of reciprocity in rather informal channels constitute linking social capital created in interaction with local institutional agents (e.g. I2.2; I2.3; I2.9; I2.10; I2.14; I2.15; I2.16; I2.18). Vastly contextually and situationally swayed, the culture of the above relations is, on the one hand, grounded in a quest for *individual* interests, either political or financial, while, on the other, it is underpinned by attempts to foster sport development through these relations (I2.9; I2.3; I2.2; I2.10; I2.14; I2.15; I2.16; I2.18). Irrespective of the particular nature of locally constructed linking social capital, it was demonstrated that engagement in this field of relations was of vast volume, thus having the effect of increasing linking social capital as a resource for sport development:

> This enables further development of this sport, because particularly in the case of [*Radnički*] *Nova Pazova* [the club] and *Morava Gepardi* [another club], the municipality contributed by providing transport services for these clubs when travelling in country and this means a lot. (I2.11)

Also, as with the grassroots football case study, locally created linking social capital that fosters access to public resources for sport development matches characteristics of 'political social capital' introduced in the literature by Serbian scholars active in the field (Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin et al., 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011). Hence, to put political social capital or local linking social capital in motion, the individuals or

groups involved in the interaction need to be willing 'to participate in a system of exchange of 'favours' and to accept the commitment of returning counter-favours' (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011: 447). The sum of these networks, and associated norms of reciprocity and trust, represents a parallel, informal structure of locally exchanged public resources for sport development in Serbia. This is how a culture of (private) relationships building in a particular social context intervenes or intrudes on the public and political system, thus forming a parallel networking format from lived cultures of relationships, forging public and political systems that are often subordinate to it. Or, as Lazić and Pešić (2013: 283) stipulate, this may be a reflection of the incompatibility of 'new norms' posed by the system transformations in the Serbian political sphere and a culture of 'old values' instilled in the relationship practices already established in this context and the society in general. Hence, in terms of locally created linking social capital, the matching results obtained from the two researched case studies firmly suggest that the wider context, in which the two different cases are embedded, enforces corresponding processes in the creation of linking social capital.

In contrast to locally reproduced linking social capital, the interplay between those national state institutions concerned with both sport and wider social development and the rugby league officials yields an infusion of linking social capital created in formal and semi-formal networks characterised by generalised norms of reciprocity and growing socially orientated trust. Likewise, as presented in the previous sections, the sum of networks established with national institutional agents—the Ministry of Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and including the governing structures of the UoB—broadens the spectrum of linking social capital, characterised by elements of bridging vertical social capital. Yet, as a transformative, dynamic, collective, developmental resource (Numerato, 2011; Spaaij, 2011), this type of linking social capital is prone to change with time. In other words, the regularity of interaction with institutional agents, including the increased reputation that rugby league has achieved through maintained developmental markers, fosters an exchange of public resources while transcending the networking line from formality to semi-formality and from weaker to thicker interactions.

Furthermore, closer inspection of the informal and sub-institutional exchange effectuated through stocks of local linking social capital that forges a variety of individual interests, as stated above, directs this debate into the sphere of manifestations

of 'negative social capital'. Interacting externally with local authorities, outside the formal system of exchanges, indulges misuse and manipulation of trust and norms of reciprocity for individual benefit (Numerato and Baglioni, 2012). These processes are usually performed in conflict with good governance and transparency practices and are claimed to be tolerated on the rugby league side for the betterment and further advancement of the sport:

> We're all in breach of regulations … We've been doing everything just to survive … In practice it works like this: someone offers you a certain amount of money and says you can use part of it and to give back the rest. They put you in a position to breach regulations and, if you decide to combat this type of system, sometime in the future, they would point to your previous breach of regulations and … the whole system is badly made. (I2.9)

Although 'connectivity' moves developmental processes, as suggested by Marina Blagojević-Hughson in an interview conducted by the European Year of Citizens Alliances (2013a), in general and for sport in particular, in certain settings it may negatively affect wider social development by encouraging individual, not collective, interest-led exchanges of resources and power.

Moreover, critically referring back to the internal consolidation of diversity within the rugby league organisation, the issue of 'tolerance' of diversity through the creation of matching identities seeks to be further elaborated, through the view of negative social capital. While the majority of research informants asserted that discrimination of any kind is not intrinsic to this sport in general (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.7; I2.8; I2.9; I2.10; I2.13; I2.14; I2.15; I2.16; I2.17; I2.20), further analysis of the interviewees' accounts suggests that although the mechanisms of inclusion for the Roma population in rugby league are implemented, these processes suffer from symbolic divides that may be decreased with time or, in other words, through the development of trust and norms of reciprocity. As Long indicates, it is not just an issue of participation and networking but about the generation of social capital that instils trustful and reciprocal relations (2008) and for that to happen, time, coupled with the generation of matching collective identity, is needed. In that regard, informant I2.6, involved in the work of a club in the south of Serbia that gathers a group of Roma players states: 'There's no discrimination now, but for two years in a row white players played with white ones, while black players played with black ones'. Similarly, when asked about openness and rights to participation in the club irrespective of national, ethnic or racial background, respondent I2.2 asserts: 'Well I think … people from other clubs [in rugby league] may happen to dislike *Morava Gepardi* [the club] because they attract so many Roma, but you will

never hear some player insults them'. In addition to the issue of Roma, sporadic, internally present, hostilities motivated by ethnic (and religious) intolerances albeit rare, have occurred against some rugby league members of non-Serbian origin (I2.5; GI2.2; I2.11). It can be argued, therefore, that inclusion (or exclusion) is a dynamic category that transforms along the route from acceptance through tolerance to inclusion or 'embeddedness' into a particular social structure (Granovetter, 1985). Finally, given that exclusion and inclusion are neither-nor categories, they meld and transform along factors that dissolve or foster the employment of connectivity processes, the 'dark side' of social capital may become 'grey' and even 'brighter' if the culture of relations changes its narrow particularised character (Long, 2008).

In summing up the model for social capital immanent to emerging sport, the *diverse* and *dynamic* nature of forms of social capital created within the emerging social capital model are the points that come to the focus. Positioned as an 'emerging' sport in the system of sport in Serbia, rugby league continuously quests for increased development and changing position within that system, including efforts for better international positioning within the global rugby league community. In this vein, social capital is a key resource that can contribute to these developmental challenges. Thus, unlike the social capital model that emerges from within and around the GFP that increasingly displays bonding traits, the social capital model for rugby league shortens the distance between bonding and bridging forms of social capital on the bonding-bridging axis. This is facilitated by the widespread employment of norms of generalised reciprocity and the consequent support in internal and external relational practices in this sport in general. On the other hand, while linking social capital developed in interactions with state national bodies resonates closer with bridging relational modes, at the local level vertical connections gravitate to bonding inter-linkages often manifested as negative social capital that correspond to principles of 'political social capital' inherent in social contexts at the semi-periphery.

6.4 Summary

This chapter has offered a framework for social capital models generated in established and emerging sports in Serbia that constitutes an original contribution to the scarce volume of empirical research on the nature of social capital in sports conducted in the context of semi-peripheral societies in the region of South Eastern Europe. Moreover, it has challenged the dominant theoretical determinants of social capital (Putnam, 2000;

Putnam and Feldstein 2003) by portraying the ways in which the cultural elements of social capital are mutually interwoven and how they interact in their structural webs. In addition, insights into the mechanisms of social capital creation and maintenance have yielded arguments that point to the highly dynamic and transferable nature of social capital that is, in the cases researched, strongly dependent on a multitude of wider local contexts (e.g. Numerato, 2011; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Schuller et al., 2000; Spaaij, 2011; Van Deth, 2003; Woolcock, 1998, 2001).

In unpacking an emerging framework for social capital, it is indicative that, as a structural element of the model, the created networks in both cases display a prevailingly informal, thick character but exercised through formal organisational structures. This is not to say, however, that formal networking is utterly set aside, but that on the scale of formal and informal relationships, the informal structure of relationships outweighs the formal. Moreover, accounting for the dynamic nature of networks characteristics, active engagement by rugby league members has resulted in an increased number of formally characterised networks, including a wider range of created networks when compared to the GFP. This phenomenon is, *inter alia*, underpinned by the rugby league's strong developmental inclination and its determination to achieve positive recognition within the wider sporting system.

Although active engagement in initiating networking practices is necessary for social capital to be created, the cultural elements of social capital—trust and norms of reciprocity—induced in such an apparatus make an essence for social capital generation and maintenance (Long, 2008). While the view on the levels and types of trust created in both cases reveal it to be in short supply and of a widely particularised nature, norms of reciprocity prove to be behind the wheel on the road to social capital creation. Namely, norms of generalised reciprocity are the key driver of social capital generation as a resource for sport development. Furthermore, comprehensively taken, the research data indicates a relative independency of the processes of trust and norms of reciprocity generation, reflected in their recurrently mismatching nature and their different levels circulating throughout networks. Evidence from both case studies revolves around these mechanisms. Ultimately, the link between broad and regular applications of generalised norms of reciprocity and the position of the sport in the development spectrum is utterly direct, linear and inversely proportional to the developmental stage of the particular sport. Current theoretical discourse on social capital, including literature on the interplay between sport and social capital, largely fails to illuminate the interrelation

between the cultural elements of social capital and their respective positions in the social capital model.

Finally, analysis of the nature of the constituent elements of social capital has induced a broadening of the framework to encapsulate a particular social capital model in the researched sports. Evidently, representation of different forms of social capital varies between cases, with overlapping spaces in relation to particular forms. Thus, while networking in and around the GFP revolves around the vicinity of bonding social capital on the bonding-bridging axis, the model for social capital in rugby league intersects between the two forms, hence enlarging the common space of intersection between bonding and bridging through widespread employment of generalised norms of reciprocity. Lastly, however, although there is an intersection with the bonding characteristics of linking social capital in both cases, connecting vertically in rugby league opens up the space for wider bridging characteristics of the linking social capital nurtured through, *inter alia*, the strong developmental inclinations the sport is featured with. The next chapter will turn to a discussion of the implications and the capacity of constructed social capital models to permeate community benefits in and through established and emerging sports.

CHAPTER 7. Established and Emerging Sports in Serbia: Does the Community Benefit?

7.1 Introduction

It was indicated earlier that, in the social sciences, the concept of community has been ascribed a vast spectrum of meanings (see Chapter 3). Whilst common elements of the concept may be extracted from the literature, it is indicative that understanding the meaning of community depends on a range of contextual settings that the communities are embedded in. These include the social, political, cultural and economic legacies around which different communities have been constructed. Therefore, the meanings of wider contexts, should find their position into the meaning of the concept of community. This research relies on this perspective, involving a conceptual delineation of the community as a synergy of overlapping entities, or networks of social relations, characterised by specific cultural elements, as discussed in Chapter 3. Correspondingly, in questioning interview respondents about their views on the concept of community, including evidence of social networking that takes place in and through sport, the following overlapping communities were derived: 1) the sporting community, involving a number of sub-communities distinguished by involvement in sport governance and sport participation levels, in both the case studies researched; 2) a local community directly interacting with the sporting community—external networks established in the local community; and 3) a wider (local) community that the sport programme operates in. Hence, broadly taken, the structure of networks developed in and through the researched sports corresponds with a dynamic notion of overlapping communities (Haq, 2006; Jarvie, 2006) in the cases researched. Moreover, building on discussion about interdependencies between social capital and socially cohesive processes that multiple communities can benefit from (see Chapters 2 and 3), this chapter strives to address the third and fourth research questions of the thesis by investigating the ways in which, and the extent to which, the particular social capital models that characterise the researched sports may affect socially cohesive processes, manifested through active civic participation, social inclusion and/or social integration in and through the researched sports in the context of the Serbian society. Therefore, the agenda for social cohesion predisposes active civic engagement in multiple communities through collaborative

practices in achieving collectively beneficial goals (e.g. Cheong et al., 2007; Easterly et al., 2006; Jeannotte, 2008; Spoonley et al., 2005).

In this vein, this chapter begins with discussion of sport volunteering in the researched cases, as an area where sports-based civic engagement and social capital best intersect, with the aim of testing its ability to affect increases in social cohesion in the selected communities. Furthermore, the chapter captures processes of 'doing for' in the form of altruism and philanthropy as a contributor to wider community cohesion in and through these particular sports. It continues on to discussion of the significance of 'masculinity' as an identity marker in *emerging* sport and as a platform for sport engagement and social cohesion. Then it turns to address the degree to which socially inclusive and integrative processes are enacted through particular social capital generation mechanisms as measures of wider social cohesion in and through *established* and *emerging* sports. The discussion in the final section revolves around additional contextual factors that inform socially (de)cohesive processes, including the nature of social capital in and through the researched sports.

7.2 Volunteerism in Sport in Serbia as an Indicator of Social Cohesion?

The literature on social capital, including its nexus with sport, recurrently discusses the association between volunteer engagement and social capital generation—in the context of high-income countries—implying positive interdependence between the two categories and specifically underlining the association between the volume of volunteer engagement and stocks of bridging social capital created. Moreover, it is widely understood that, in these contexts, volunteerism contributes to growing community benefits through the development of social cohesion, citizenship and civil identity (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Donoghue, 2001; Harvey et al., 2007; Putnam, 2000; Sport England, 2003; Zakus et al., 2009). Little if any empirical research, however, has addressed the nature and dynamics of sport volunteerism in the context of semi-peripheral Serbia. This research, therefore, intends to offer original insight into the issues of volunteering, from a social capital point of view, in the *established* and *emerging* sports investigated.

In an attempt to trace the blueprint for sport volunteerism in Serbia, so as to position the volunteering practices of the researched sports in the wider contextual framework of

sport volunteering, interviews were held with sport experts active in numerous fields across the sport system. This group of interviewees, however, painted a controversial portrait of contemporary sport volunteerism in Serbia. While all agreed that trends in *short-term sport event* volunteering are, as of the 2009 Summer Universiade held in Belgrade, increasing (I4.2; I4.3; I4.4; I4.5; I3.2; I3.3; I3.5; I3.6), issues of formal and informal sport volunteering on a steady, *long-term* basis—an indicator of social cohesion of interest for this research into grassroots, amateur sport initiatives—have been contested.

In supporting the view about ample stocks of formal and informal volunteering within the spectrum of sports organisations in Serbia, interviewee I4.3 states:

> I think that [volunteerism in sport] is extremely invisible. It was visible at the Universiade and it was massive, but apart from that, in everyday sport organisation … but there are a lot people who work on a voluntarily basis, in both big and small sports clubs … and the clubs survive on the basis of voluntary work. It is the same with sports associations […] in these non-commercial sports only maybe the general secretary gets a salary, and he often doesn't get even that, all the rest is just volunteer work.

This view was backed up by another three respondents (I4.4; I3.3; I3.6), while the narratives of the remaining informants pointed to a general lack of volunteer engagement on a permanent basis in sports (I4.1; I4.2; I4.5; I3.2; I3.5). This is due to constraints caused by wider contextual factors, including the unregulated position of sports volunteers in the system of volunteerism and sport in Serbia, and backed by issues of a lack of 'time and money' (Putnam, 2000) as preventive to an increase in volunteering practices (I4.1; I4.2; I4.4; I4.5; I3.3; I3.5; I3.6). Although contextually constrained (to be discussed in the sections to follow), at the heart of (steady) voluntarily engagement are generalised norms of reciprocity towards sport, that the volunteers at various levels of sport organisation exercise: 'All those people who volunteer, usually former athletes, they do so because they love sport, not for money because there is no money in sport in Serbia' (I4.3). Additionally, interviewee I3.3 underlines that, despite growing contextual hurdles, volunteerism in sport is based on tremendous enthusiasm and affection for sport, which adds to the value of voluntary work in sport in Serbia:

> […] [w]e don't live in a country where people can have a decent life so that one can easily volunteer and contribute to society. Most people's lives are very difficult without much money and, above all, they are engaged in volunteer work, but this can be dangerous too.

In this vein, concerns about issues of the sustainability of volunteer work in the present social context have been expressed by some sport experts engaged as volunteers in

particular organisations: '[T]here are fewer and fewer sport enthusiasts who are willing to volunteer and this poses problems' (I3.6).

According to interviewee accounts, therefore, trends in and forms of sport volunteerism are, in the Serbian context, a contested area. While some interviewees indicate that its ample but blurred character significantly contributes to sport and community development, others by contrast underline the plummet in long-term volunteering, veiled with de-developmental contextual processes. On the other hand, structured volunteering at major sporting events in Serbia has gained currency recently. The above accounts, however, may only act as an initial step towards investigation of the interplay between the nature of volunteer engagement in the researched sports, the nature of social capital and the resulting community benefits, in the form of social cohesion. With respect to the GFP and rugby league, these issues are to be addressed in the sections to follow.

7.2.1 The Nature of Volunteerism in the Grassroots Football Programme

In an attempt to assess interdependencies between the nature of volunteering, the nature of social capital and the social benefits that arise from voluntary engagement in sports, locating levels and forms of volunteerism across the organisational structure of the GFP is indispensable. As reported by one of the key officials from the FAS's GFP Department:

> The entire football organisation is based on volunteerism. We have a huge number of volunteers … thus, there are very few professionals … their engagement is sometimes supported financially, but it doesn't count as professional engagement and that is a big difference. The FAS has 135,000 registered members, of which only 45 are [permanently] employed. (I1.4)

Likewise, in the delivery of the GFP, principles of voluntary engagement are put to work. Volunteers play a critical role in the delivery of the programme across Serbia, while the key governing positions within the programme are held by professional staff (I1.4; I1.5; I1.7). Yet it is once again worth distinguishing between the FAS's Grassroots Network of Coordinators—volunteers directly managed by the FAS's Grassroots Football Department—and partnership projects operating under the GFP umbrella, so as to delineate the levels and forms of active civic participation. In particular, the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators consists of 132 formal members who are in charge of programme implementation at national, regional, and local levels. The coordinators are engaged in the Network on a long-term voluntary basis,

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performing programme development and delivery operations, which, amongst other things, includes event-based voluntary engagement organised as part of a specific initiative.

According to numerous interviewee accounts, volunteering within the Network is remarkably time-consuming. The engagement is intensive and compromises at least 20 to 30 weekends of direct work with children at football events per year, including additional engagements related to specific programme requirements (I1.7). On the other hand, taken as a whole, development and delivery of the partnership projects operating under the GFP auspices displays an inconsistent approach to volunteering. Namely, *sport-for-development* projects of the B.A.A.P. and Special Olympics irregularly outsource volunteers, non-members of the organisations, to support one-off initiatives (I1.1; I1.3), while, in contrast, the OFFS strategically grounds project implementation on event-based local volunteer engagement that links in a collaborative action a number of project stakeholders (I1.9; I1.13; GI1.1). In addition, *sport development* initiatives such as the Mini-maxi League and the FairPlay League differ in their approaches to volunteerism. While the FairPlay League exclusively operates on a non-voluntarily basis, in the Mini-maxi League 'more than half of the members engaged are volunteers' (I1.7). Thus, according to the analysed evidence, GFP projects directly managed by the FAS's Grassroots Football Department rely on formal long-term volunteering, including event-based volunteering, as a constituent of the entire volunteer engagement of Network members. In contrast, both formal and informal short-term, event-based sports volunteering is represented in the majority of the GFP's partnership projects. In addition, informal volunteer support from non-members, such as parents of children participating in the above initiatives, was deemed to be incidental (I1.8; I1.9; I1.2; I1.10; I1.11; I1.15).

Furthermore, *trends in volunteerism practices*, and *factors* that imbue these trends, may additionally speak to the nature of volunteerism in GFP initiatives, which, accompanied by a particular social capital model, may reflect the level of social cohesion in the relevant communities (Harvey et al., 2007; Nichols, 2003). In this respect, a majority of interviewees felt that volunteering practices tend to exhibit a decreasing or stagnating trend lately, as a consequence of the following factors: a) increased demands for semi-professional volunteer engagement (I1.7; I1.6; I1.4; I1.8; I1.11; I1.12; I1.14; I1.15); b) the pressures of 'time and money' (I1.2; I1.4; I1.5; I1.6; I1.7; I1.8; I1.9; I1.0; I1.11;

I1.12; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15); c) low level individuals' value system[13] that dominates Serbian cultural space (I1.7; I1.8; I1.9; I1.2; I1.10; I1.13; I1.15), and d) narrow trust at different levels of interaction within the programme (I1.7; I1.6; I1.8; I1.9; I1.10; I1.11; I1.13; I1.4; I1.5).

As noted earlier (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1), the changing nature of sport volunteerism globally, involving semi-professional engagement, challenges the levels of volunteer participation in a sport delivery system, thus creating drawbacks for social capital maintenance and reproduction in and around sports organisations (Cuskelly et al., 2006; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Seippel, 2010). This is fully applicable to the case in question. In this sense, a key grassroots programme official, performing multiple roles within the programme's structure, notes:

> Volunteerism [in this instance] is limited. I feel uncomfortable asking them to work at their own expense. Now, this is a huge engagement if one wants to do it properly and it exceeds the limits of volunteerism and it is simply not possible to do it this way anymore. (I1.7)

Similarly, respondent I1.8 feels that the boundaries between volunteer and professional engagement should leave the grey zone: 'We are volunteers and, if we are volunteers, one should accept a volunteer as he/she is and not to chase him all the time for the things that he hasn't been able to finish on time. I will do it but when the time permits'. The above constraining factor particularly applies to long-term formal volunteer engagement within the programme, which requires increasing investment in volunteer capacity building in order to adequately perform delegated tasks (I1.4).

In a complementary fashion, as reported by the vast majority of informants, increasing pressures of 'time and money' in the Serbian social context significantly affect the decline in sport volunteerism. Thus, the particular social, and in this segment, economic context strongly predisposes the levels and the ways the community may benefit from individual volunteer engagement. In particular, community benefit is dependent on individual welfare and is subject to the wider social context. In the view of this study, therefore, the wider contextual setting gradually shapes the level and the types of community benefits that arise from collective and individual engagement. Referring to the particular scope of volunteerism in this programme, research participant I1.2 indicates that '[we] live in times when one must work two jobs simultaneously for a

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[13] It is beyond the scope of this section to discuss the notion of value systems, but to indicate to the relevance of values in the context of resulting volunteer engagement. In this vein, the concept of value system is understood here as 'an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conducts or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance' (Rokeach, 1973: 5).

decent life for his/her family and people here live that way and we can't blame them for not undertaking voluntary work'. Confirming this view, interviewee I1.11 points to a direct dependence between the level of volunteerism and the social and economic context, including the relevance of the degree of individual welfare:

> It is very difficult for those people who come from Lebane or Vranje[14], who have 25 thousand dinars [monthly] salary[15], and take care of a whole family, and they come to Belgrade and spend 10 thousand dinars [on travel expenses], and they [the programme officials] don't refund them on time, and this is a problem and this impacts other things as well … For example, when we go for a study-visit to Sweden or Norway and there we see a lot of volunteers and parents who volunteer as well, but those people there have 4 to 5 thousand Euros [monthly] salary and they have a kind of social security there and then they can easily engage themselves after they come from work in volunteering activities, to help, to work. And here in Serbia, when one comes home from work he changes his clothes for another job and he goes to do another job and it is like that […]. And this is the problem and we can't [do it] like in Switzerland, Sweden or Norway.

The issue of the relevance of the wider context for negative or stagnating trends in long-term volunteer engagement was repeatedly highlighted by all interviewees in both case studies. Still, pressures of 'time and money', as contextual factors affecting active civic participation, including demands for the increased professionalisation of volunteers, are not specific only to the Serbian context. Commentators in the field found that the changing nature of volunteer work in terms of demands for increased volunteer capacity building, including a wide range of contextual factors that prevent active engagement in the community matters, generally characterise the changing nature of volunteerism in sport impacting on the nature of social capital and community benefits (e.g. Breuer et al., 2012; Cuskelly, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Putnam, 2000). This is closely allied, *inter alia*, with issues of values, including the form and levels of trust and, hence, the model of social capital, that alter trends in sport volunteerism. We have seen already (in Chapter 6) that, on the bonding-bridging social capital axis, the GFP features more bonding social capital at an organisational level, hence the trust developed in this organisation has been shown to be of a particularised character and narrow in nature. As stated by the majority of interview respondents, volunteer engagement in the programme is directly dependent on trust or, in other words, on the scarce levels of trust, including the low level of individual and social values systems. The key factor in the erosion of levels of trust and their particularised nature, which directly affects levels of engagement in the programme, is the decreasing credibility of the FAS and its stated inability to adequately support and compensate voluntary work in this particular context

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[14] Towns in southern Serbia, the region with the highest poverty rates (UNDP, 2011). http://rs.one.un.org/organizations/12/pbild/PBILD%20factsheet%202011.pdf
[15] Based on the exchange rate as of 20 February 2014 this equals EUR 215.5.

(I1.7). This further acts as a de-cohesive factor directly impacting decreases in trust and volunteerism, respectively:

> We now need to work for 6 months without being refunded for expenses … People have to pay travel expenses, phone bills, etc. And they will be refunded but, again, they think 'we might be refunded, or we might not be refunded at all'. This is the prevalent mentality in this country, where people get cheated and disappointed and being overburdened with economic problems. (I1.6)

Moreover, interviewee I1.14 feels that for most volunteers enthusiasm is drying up: 'We've been doing this for two years now, I mean … I want to believe in this initiative, in contrast to those who've lost their faith, and they all are telling me that they don't believe [in it] anymore, but I still want to believe'. However, while inter-organisational levels and types of trust bolster negative trends in volunteerism in this initiative, the wider community culture of trust and norms infiltrates the scope of volunteerism, including future volunteer recruitment. As was suggested by all respondents in this case study, the wider community does not regard volunteer engagement as grounded in attempts to contribute to sport development and thus to the wider community, but only as a means of gaining individual benefit. This negatively affects the spread of volunteering practices across the community in sport and other social and/or cultural engagements. In this respect an interviewee coordinating programme activities in a southern Serbian province states the following:

> There is currently a lack of volunteers because it is very difficult to find people nowadays who will do something for the sake of football without some kind of individual benefit … and this is the fact, the first thing they ask is 'what do I get out of it?', it's simply like that. (I1.10)

Correspondingly, research participant I1.11 adds that most people in the local community subvert volunteerism with the following approaches to engagement of any kind:

> Everybody thinks that someone is stealing, that someone has some profit from it and when someone enthusiastically takes something on, when someone wants to invest their time, the first comment that you can hear is: 'he would not have done that if he wasn't being paid for it'.

Likewise, informal involvement by parents as volunteers in the programme's initiatives is strongly predisposed with the above factors, and rarely occurring, as explained by informant I1.8:

> I had a chance to cooperate with parents whose children participated in the programme, and they are active in the sense that they will want to come along to offer some transport services once, twice or three times, but once their kid leaves the team, or is not included in this initiative anymore, they will give up and they will not be active anymore because this is a matter of individual interest. So I haven't yet met a real volunteer.

On balance, however, the OFFS (a partnership initiative in the programme) shows an ample, steady, formal, reoccurring, event-based volunteer engagement that positively influences the general trend of volunteering in and around this programme: 'Our network [of volunteers] is very important and we are definitely the organisation with the highest statistics of volunteer hours [contributed]' (GI1.1.1). In addition, as confirmed by the relevant research respondents, while active in the project, volunteers contribute extensively to bridging with the local community through engagement with community representatives:

> The role of our leaders, who are actually volunteers, is enormous and they are probably the pillars of our project at the moment because they take on more work than professional staff and they are people who are recognised in their town and who are able to cooperate with the local government and they are our link with the municipality. (GI1.1.2)

Still, at the level of the programme as a whole, an additional factor may yield implications to the levels and forms of volunteering. Namely, it has been already stated that engagement in the programme involves the multiplication of roles taken on and tasks performed by individual actors (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1). According to commentators in the field, this represents a common practice in sport organisations and programmes, in the context of developed societies, which provokes the generation of mainly bridging social capital by diminishing the number of structural holes between particular entities interacting in a given sporting environment (Cuskelly, 2008; Doherty and Misener, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013). There is, however, no specific evidence confirming whether volunteers take on multiple roles because of the hurdles in the recruitment of new volunteers or in an attempt to retain particular positions by disabling access to potential new members. Yet, when cross-referencing the findings of this thesis (see Chapter 6), one comes to the realisation that the latter is a plausible explanation—i.e. one of the mechanisms preventing the increase in the programme volunteering practices, which indirectly indicates the motives for volunteer engagement within the GFP in Serbia.

Drawing on the latter discussion, *motives for volunteering* may be strongly associated with the ways social capital is generated and maintained in the programme, contributing to or contesting previously imposed relationships between volunteerism, social capital and social cohesion. Additionally, the motivation to engage in volunteering activities implicates the dimensions and sustainability of volunteerism, strongly reflecting on the context in which volunteering is performed (Clary and Snyder, 1999 cited in Hoye et

al., 2008). According to the interviewees' accounts, motivation for volunteering in the programme is multidimensional. Still, as frequently reported, one of the principle motives to actively participate in this programme is *belief in the cause*, that of football development, while the most common expression when discussing volunteerism with the study participants was *enthusiasm*—the glue that keeps network members together and drives their altruistic approach to involvement in this programme, thus contributing to its evolvement (I1.7; I1.6; I1.8; I1.4; I1.5; I1.10; I1.11; I1.3; I1.14; I1.5). In this respect respondent I1.7 notes that people volunteer in this initiative because '[they] love sport, because they want to participate in these activities, to give their contribution, this is a fact, but one needs to affirm them to give them opportunity to participate', while participant I1.10, who coordinates the programme in southern Serbia, notes that there are fewer individuals who undertake volunteer work for reasons of enthusiasm: '[t]here are a few people around me, my friends, my close friends, who are real enthusiasts and they are helping me [in this project] … they really love football and give themselves fully'.

Furthermore, enthusiasm for sport development is additionally sustained by maintaining networks of friendships or social interactions through volunteering activities: 'First of all, we are here because we're all friends and that is very good, and most of us have huge [sic] experience in working with children, but we need better stimulation from above [the FAS]' (I1.15). In the same fashion, interviewee I1.6 states that the only motive that keeps him in the programme, in this context, is a group of his friends involved in the initiative. Clearly, these narratives suggest a strong association between social capital and volunteer engagement in the segments of contribution to sport development and, thus, to community development, or in other words, 'doing for' a particular cause 'with' people in a particular network comprising close social interaction, as has been demonstrated elsewhere in the literature (Cuskelly, 2008; Doherty, 2005; Hoye et al., 2008; Sport England, 2003; Wang, 2004). Moreover, 'doing with' to do 'for' is grounded in instilled norms of generalised reciprocity towards sport and community development, as shown in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

Moreover, an interview respondent who holds one of the key managerial positions within the programme and is responsible for the recruitment of key volunteer staff, summarises the main motivational levers of volunteerism in the programme as follows:

> First and foremost, it is enthusiasm, time and years spent in football and friendships, hence there are these affirmative motives. On the other hand, they [volunteers] are gaining in significance within the football organisation. The third motive is to get higher

ranked positions in the football organisation and to open up the possibility to come to some privileged position in the future. And the fourth motive may be some eventual income they can get from their engagement. (I1.4)

Yet, although altruistic motives inform volunteerism in this programme, the issue of micro, meso and macro contexts, as we have seen above, challenges extrinsically imbued motives (to be active for community benefit) by replacing them with instrumental or intrinsic personal motives at the forefront of voluntary engagement in this programme. Therefore, although enthusiasm and friendship instil involvement in the programme, opportunities for personal development, increased social mobility within the organisation, ego enhancement through recognition and potential future rewards (in money or in kind) predispose active participation for individual benefit (I1.14; I1.7; I1.15; I1.9). In addition, event-based involvement of, for example, parent volunteers, where existent, is mostly stimulated by an inclination to participate more in their children's lives by taking part in/around their sporting activities (I1.13; I1.9; GI1.1).

Correspondingly, while the nature of the motives to volunteer complements the nature of volunteerism in sport in the particular micro, meso and macro contexts, it also has the potential to validate or re-discover the nature of social capital generated and maintained in this programme, which from individual, organisational and community aspects displays a predominantly bonding character (see Chapter 6). Moreover, a decline in voluntary engagement or, at best, its stagnation, is associated with an erosion of the volume of social networks or the number of actors involved in social networks that in turn impacts on the levels of individual and collective social capital grounded, again, in a range of de-developmental contextual factors as explained elsewhere in this thesis, including a shift in the models of volunteering (as dominant in the contexts of developed countries). This is to say that a transformation of the approach to volunteering that includes increased professionalisation of volunteer engagement is not, however, contextually tailored, but that it is applied to national and local contexts in a top-down manner, in line with the desired models of volunteerism prescribed by the key international organisations concerned with grassroots football development. In this segment, as in other cultural, social, economic and political fields in Serbia, there is a discord between the 'new', transformative models of engagement and the culturally rooted, thus contextually shaped, 'old' models of performance (e.g. Lazić and Pešić, 2013).

Moreover, volunteer engagement in this programme forges practices of solidarity and friendship bound by particularised trust, affecting group cohesion. On the other hand, the extended scope of norms of reciprocity, notably the generalised ones, inspire cooperation and collaboration in achieving collective programmatic goals—i.e. sport development (see Chapter 6)—affecting levels of social cohesion, particularly at the organisational level. It is indicative, however, that the cohesive processes multiple communities may benefit from are dependent on a myriad of individual interests or motives to volunteer in sport. They are also dependent on the nature of social capital immanent to the particular sport, as shown earlier. In that regard, if individual goals, often heavily affected by the position of the individual (volunteer) within the wider social context, outweigh the collective mission, prospects for increased social cohesion may be threatened. Likewise, the factors that threaten further volunteer engagement— such as a lack of support from the top managing body, the FAS, including a lack of trust towards this body—equally erode processes of extended social cohesion at the organisational level. Thus, within the scope of this research, the association between the nature of volunteerism in sport, social capital and consequently social cohesion in qualitative terms, is evidently casual or, to a high degree direct. That said inspected through sport volunteerism as one of its markers, social cohesion within and around this programme exists in fragmented terms, having limited capacity to instil wider, long-term local community cohesion.

7.2.2 The Nature of Volunteerism in Rugby League

In contrast to the nature of volunteerism in the GFP, which melds together different forms of volunteer engagement, rugby league principally relies on ample formal (and informal) *long-term volunteering* practices that represent one of the main resources for the development of this sport in Serbia. According to Donnelly and Harvey, this is 'the most frequent form of volunteering in sport [and] is directly connected with sports development […] found at the youth/community/grass-roots levels of sport, where volunteers engage in all of the tasks necessary for the organisation to function' (2013: 60). Hence, the roots of its development and the prospects for the further expansion of this sport are largely grounded in the application of long-term formal voluntary practices across the multiple engagements of rugby league members:

> In our clubs, there are no paid staff […] our sport is based on that [volunteerism], rugby league … must be based on amateurism, the sport must be based on amateurism. If one does it differently in this context and with this type of sport, there will be not much

success, it will fall apart like a house of cards, it's as simple as that. […] So the sport should be developed by volunteerism. (I2.2)

The above statement was confirmed by all research participants involved in this case study in the following manner: 'We are all volunteers and enthusiasts' (I2.1); or 'Everybody in rugby league volunteers or volunteered once, also there are kids [from youth teams] who help, but at the end there are 4-5 people who are the most engaged' (I2.3). Thus, members of the entire rugby league organisation are involved in volunteering, with a range of tasks and activities undertaken so as to enable the sport to develop sustainably.

As indicated earlier, however, long-term volunteering practices in amateur sport is remarkably time-consuming but at the same time it is a gift of time and civic engagement for the common cause (Godbout, 2002) that directly affects the resourceful nature of social capital, resonating with social cohesion mobilisation mechanisms. In this sense, in the case of rugby league in Serbia, it is the gift of time and civic engagement, but equally it is the gift of the individual contributions (in kind and/or money) of rugby league members that resonates with the establishment of generalised reciprocal relations in this sport—reciprocity established between members of the organisation and the common goal, i.e. sport development: 'We are all volunteers in this sport. We, people who have invested an infinite amount of time and money amongst other things. I bought the goalposts from my first salary, for example' (I2.13). Or as interviewee I2.5 notes: 'I have invested in rugby and its development more than ten thousand Euros of my money, a lot of my time also, because I'm a rugby fanatic … and I didn't count on repayment, only on sport development'. The narratives of the majority of informants, who are involved in this sport on a long-term basis, some of them from the beginning of its emergence in Serbia, have accentuated that their engagement cannot be comprehensively delineated by what is generally understood as volunteer practice (see Chapter 3) because it, *inter alia*, includes acts of donations to help the rugby league community develop. The value of this type of engagement as a resource for the development of the sport and, consequently, the wider community is even more substantial considering the wider Serbian contextual landscape, characterised by the impediments of a deficiency of 'time and money'—an unsettled, insecure and tense existence for the general population.

Furthermore, the picture of volunteerism in this sport needs to be complemented by the informal long-term involvement of parents, notably mothers who provide their services

mostly as *caregivers* to support the engagement of their children in this sport. This was repeatedly stressed during the interviews (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.5; I2.7; I2.9; I2.12; I2.13; I2.15; I2.17; I2.18). While caregiving is an act of support, solidarity, empathy and altruism (Blagojević-Hughson, 2013b), it has the potential to instil a system of values in children, while translating it to fields external to family circles: the values of giving and, thus, caring for the cause. From a social capital perspective this contributes to the extension of social relationships permeated by generalised norms of reciprocity and trust. In addition, this role of (mostly) mothers is the sole role women perform on a long-term basis in the development of this sport (I2.2; I2.9; I2.11; I2.13; I2.17). This also speaks to the gendered (or masculine) nature of social capital in the context of this sport and its implication for social capital outcomes, as is to be discussed in the sections to follow. Hence, one of the rugby league activists explains the role of mothers who volunteer in rugby league as follows:

> The women who help the most are the mothers. Not only the mothers of children who play, but our mothers [lead staff in the organisation]. For example, my mother washes all the kits of the members of my club. Well yes, who else would have done that … She washes all that dirty stuff, or she sews the jerseys when needed, you know mothers do that. Mothers are the biggest volunteers in our sport. (I2.2)

Although informal volunteering of the above type may be considered a small-scale resource for the sport, it cannot be disregarded entirely. Interview accounts strongly point to this form of support as perpetual, enabling activism to translate from the micro zone, that of the family, to the field of sport development, in this case: 'Look, our parents, his mother who is a professor, she washed tons of jerseys, my mother as well. We, and our parents, our mothers … we gave up so many things for this' (I2.9). Again, from the social capital perspective, endeavours of support—including exercise of a generalised reciprocal attitude to generating social cohesion at the micro level—may predispose the spread of social benefits to different areas of individual engagement.

Moreover, some of the research participants added that external networking through sport, with other sports and NGOs operating in the local community, expanded (informal) volunteer engagement in sport and in the community external to sport (e.g. I2.4; GI2.2; I2.9; I2.3;). In that respect, respondent I2.4, the coach of a junior team in a southern Serbian club states: 'Our players also volunteer in an NGO, they are volunteers there, and this is because they want to help the cause of this organisation, and their volunteering is based on their free will, it is not instructed from the top [by the club]'. Similarly, participant I2.9 confirms that volunteering or helping out other sports to develop in the local community, facilitated through external, local community networks

of relationships is the 'natural' thing to do for some individuals in the rugby league community. Evidently, and in line with developed reciprocal practices within rugby league, bridging externally has affected the spread of volunteering practices across the local community, instilling multiple benefits. Still, while there are indications in the literature pointing to sport's volunteering potential to trigger extended volunteer engagement in fields external to a particular sport (Cuskelly, 2008; Doherty and Misener, 2008; Welty Peachey et al., 2013), including the fact that sport volunteers in particular contexts are more prone to undertake voluntary work for more than one organisation compared to non-sport volunteers (Cuskelly, 2008: 198), in the context of this research, it is not fully plausible to argue that volunteering in one sport predisposes an individual to volunteer in other sports or relevant social areas. This is mostly due to the sporadic character of these occurrences, which are situationally and contextually bound. On the other hand, however, the above evidence may serve as an exploratory input to inform future research in this area.

The nature of volunteering needs to be complemented by an understanding of the current value of volunteering, or the trends in volunteerism around this sport, particularly in relation to formal long-term engagement. Analysis of the research data has facilitated the extraction of *factors* that have hindered the value of, and trends in, volunteerism in and around rugby league recently. These are as follows: a) the lack of human resources or the multiple roles volunteers take on, including a lack of trust to delegate roles (I2.2; I2.3; I2.5; I2.7; I2.9; I2.10; I2.11; I2.12; I2.13; I2.14; I2.15; I2.17; I2.18; I2.20; GI2.2), b) generational change in connection to the erosion of or changes in the value system (I2.1; I2.3; I2.5; I2.7; I2.9; GI2.2; I2.10; I2.13; I2.17; I2.18) and c) wider contextual factors such as issues of 'time and money', impacting on volunteering levels which, as indicated by the interviewees, were stagnating or, in some instances, declining (I2.2; I2.3; I2.7; I2.9: I2.10; I2.11; I2.13; I2.15; I2.17; I2.18).

Firstly, the practice of performing multiple roles within the sport organisation keeps volunteering from both sustainability and further expansion (see Section 6.3.2). Interviewee I2.9 demonstrates this issue as follows: 'For example, there are clubs that have seven Board members, of which three are active and one of those three is both the coach and a player'. Furthermore, as has been shown earlier, holding multiple roles in a sport organisation is a common practice for amateur and grassroots sports (Cuskelly, 2008; Doherty and Misener, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Nichols et al., 2012), which creates prospects for the generation and maintenance of bridging social capital.

Yet again, in the context of rugby league in Serbia, this can hardly be said to be the case. The lack of trust that is generally characteristic for both case studies researched, and its particular nature, greatly disables recruitment of new volunteers from outside the organisation and also to the redistribution of duties within the rugby league organisation itself (GI2.2; I2.15). Likewise, human resource capacities insufficient to execute both administrative and coaching roles pose drawbacks for increased engagement or the redistribution of duties, which is again a consequence of the lack of trust in the ability of volunteers to respond to potential delegated tasks (I2.9; I2.17; I2.3; GI2.2). On the other hand, the state of social and cultural values, infected by hurdles present in the wider social context, is reflected in the necessity to undertake multiple roles in a club or the SRLF so as to manage operations. In this vein, interviewee I2.17 notes:

> Well, unfortunately we don't have enough people who are willing to get involved, because everything is on a voluntary basis, so that we could delegate duties in the club to different people … because at the moment I'm the president of the club, and financial director and am doing all administrative stuff and many other things as well, all in order for the club to function, and there is no one else who would like to take on some tasks and even no one who would be able to do something, because for some things you need capacities, you need to generate some contacts, someone serious should do that […] but this is very difficult.

Yet, the pitfalls of multiple volunteer engagements for a stagnating or narrowing inflow of volunteers are stated as recognised by key rugby league managing staff in the following manner:

> It is very difficult to overburden one volunteer with a bunch of tasks, because if he needs to be on the Board, to register a match, to maintain the pitch, to get some financial resources for the club, to be a coach and, in the end, to play the game … this is very difficult. That guy … he's brought to the edge … and then he may just say 'I'm sick of rugby and everything, I don't want to do this anymore'. If one is a volunteer, one needs to do this with some kind of satisfaction and joy, and should be disburdened in the sense that this is a hobby, a kind of pleasure, but not a source of pressure and stress. And this is a huge problem for our sport, and not only rugby but all sports.

This sentiment indicates an understanding of the role of volunteers and the significance of keeping volunteer work balanced so as to contribute to it increasing, or at least to sustaining its current value for the organisation. The same interviewee implies, however, that there is an inability to separate multiple roles at this current stage of rugby league development, due to an inability to recruit additional volunteers from amongst 'new generations' of players, or in some instances to keep ones already engaged in the club due to impediments arising from negative values brought into the sport by 'new generations' of players:

> We have a problem with young, new players because they don't know what socialisation is, on a minimal level, what it means when one contributes to something, they don't respect anything, they don't see the woods for the trees […] and there is a lot

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of negative energy amongst those young people, this is terrible, this is … they don't get that they play for the club, they don't appreciate anything […] those kids, the youth they don't understand what contribution means. No, they don't understand this … they even mock those who are doing something [for the club] […] and this is a huge problem.

Although, according to the other interviewee accounts, the erosion of values hinders increased engagement amongst the new generation of players (I2.1; I2.3; I2.7; I2.8; I2.11; I2.18), this occurrence is often narrowed to a micro context of clubs founded in Belgrade while although present, the dispersion of such values in provincial clubs is present to the lesser extent. Obviously, while reluctance towards volunteer engagement that resonates with a dearth of inclination for wider 'contribution' impedes collective social capital, it also heavily disables the processes of intra-organisational collaboration with respect to a mismatch of individual and common organisational goals, resulting in a decline of social cohesion. Yet, recognition of these issues by key management staff required an adequate reaction to suppress such practices by preventing those who promote the above values from remaining members of the organisation (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.5; I2.7; I2.9; I2.11; I2.15; GI2.2). In this respect, organisational commitment to the instilment of positive values may pave the way for increased volunteer engagement and could potentially initiate socially cohesive processes in this sport.

However, while the architecture of micro and meso organisational contexts is a direct output of intra-organisational endeavours, it indirectly resonates with the environment it stands in. Hence, the wider social context, as it has been repeatedly indicated in this thesis, is a factor that complements and streamlines particular outcomes that result from involvement in the development of this sport. In this vein, complaints about the wider context featured regularly throughout the interview process. As with the GFP, issues of 'time and money' degrade trends in volunteer engagement in this sport too. The issue of time-stressed volunteer work, or time as a factor in increasing volunteerism has been discussed previously in the literature, however in a different context—that of developed societies which cannot be equated with the present contextual scope (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Putnam, 2000). As noted by respondent I2.10: '[Voluntary] engagement [in this sport] requires a lot of time, and this is a huge problem, and the majority of people don't want to get into this as there is no guarantee that they'll get some money out of it, because mostly, it's all about money'. This view on the issue of 'money' and individual interest dominating the Serbian context is further explained as follows:

It is difficult [to increase volunteerism]. During communism, for example, people had a greater sense of cohesion, greater will, energy—they were willing to contribute, to develop something. Now this is totally gone … how many times have people asked me: 'Hey how much money is there, or is there some money at all?' It makes me really angry, because I don't want to talk about that. What money? … People have become slaves to money and they look only through that prism. (I2.9)

On the other hand, and in line with the narratives of the GFP research informants, the degree of individual welfare that directly resonates with the wider social context, touches upon community benefits, arising, *inter alia*, from volunteer engagement. Thus, many of the interviewees' claims revolve around the following:

Well, you know, again, everything from the top down in this state is reflected in the social life of all of us. And it is a big problem here notably because of poverty, you can't insist on volunteerism, on amateurism, on democracy … there is no democracy with empty stomachs, especially down in the south of Serbia. When someone has [a monthly salary of] ten thousand dinars, you know the situation … and it is very difficult to get people to do something. (I2.9)

Finally, as argued by participants of the group interviews who work as multitasking volunteers, the wider contextual setting poses limits on sustaining the degree of volunteering even at its current level: 'It would be great if we could deal with fewer duties, to deal only with development and for someone else to take on some administrative tasks, because we have our limits too. We both have families, small kids and the burden of surviving in Serbia' (GI2.2.2). Strongly developed generalised reciprocal norms (see Chapter 6), however, overweigh implications of individual 'risks' or 'losses' from volunteer engagement in this sport, keeping voluntary practices circulating further for the benefit of the (sporting) community. Moreover, building on the nature of the cultural aspects of social capital in rugby league, a link between the nature of volunteerism and the nature of social capital may be established through examination of the motives that steer active civic engagement in this sport.

Partially in line with the motivations that keep GFP members involved in volunteer engagement, engagements in rugby league robustly rely on the notion of contribution to sport development, based on enthusiasm and affection for the sport, accompanied by the enjoyment of participating in the sport community and socialising through this engagement. Still, unlike the nature of motivations to volunteer in the GFP, the above volunteer triggers are dispersed across rugby league in a less restricted manner, which corresponds with the differences in the social capital models of the two cases—the latter being associated with broader norms of generalised reciprocity.

Hence, the entire pool of interviewees in this case argued that their enthusiastic approach to development of this sport, including stocks of affection and passion for this sport, motivates volunteer engagement: 'There is so much enthusiasm in this sport, pure enthusiasm and love towards the sport. And this keeps us engaged, and that way you can achieve much' (I2.1). Moreover, interviewee I2.2 confirms that people volunteer in this sport 'because they are in love with this sport and because of cohesion, the spirit of cohesion is the greatest here [in rugby league] and if you love something you want to contribute to its development no matter what'.

Besides, participation in the rugby league community is driven by established networks of friendships: 'I think that people like to belong to the community and have friends there and this a kind of satisfaction, and because they want to participate in something, and when they see the results of their engagement this feeds their future participation' (I2.11). Likewise, respondent I2.15, engaged in the sport on a long-term basis and in multiple roles, believes that passion towards the sport connects people with different backgrounds and identities:

> You get friendships and some kind of affirmation, because you enter the battle on the field, you score with your friends … respect, passion and that's what brings us together. We, who are all different, are united through that love and that keeps us going […] so it is pure enthusiasm and those who love this sport give 100 percent of themselves.

In this respect, as earlier indicated, 'gifts' of 'time and money' are related to the motivation to contribute for reasons of enthusiasm and altruism, or for extrinsic reasons. Moreover, and in line with what Hoye and his colleagues found in their study on motivations to volunteer in Australian community rugby clubs (2008), long-term volunteering is primarily based on the above motives, as future pay-offs in emerging sports, especially in the context of semi-peripheral Serbia certainly cannot be the motivational basis. Still, small-scale instrumental reasons complement perspectives on the motives to undertake long-term volunteer engagement in rugby league, reflected in future pay-offs in the form of travel abroad, possible earnings and increased recognition within the organisation (I2.1; GI2.2; I2.11; I2.17; I2.18). A research participant involved in the development of junior-level rugby states the following: 'I am very glad that this is developing and I believe that, in the future, I might have some small income from this' (I2.17). In a similar vein, respondent I2.18 notes:

> This sport enabled me to travel across Europe, something that wouldn't be possible otherwise. And simply I experienced something that wouldn't be feasible without participation in this sport. I didn't earn anything from my engagement. I could be injured, or something, but I remained here […] because this [sport] has something to

offer […]. And, also, I do not see financial potential here, but potential for increased credibility and this is the aim of everybody here and this is normal.

Remarkably, although instrumental reasons imbue volunteering practices, they do not dominate throughout the volunteering motivational scale in rugby league. Moreover, in contrast to the GFP case study, the above portrayal of motivations for volunteering shows that, although the wider social context, including an individual's position in this context, has a say in the processes of trends and forms of volunteering in rugby league, it does not extensively challenge reasons for involvement and contribution to sport development in a voluntarily manner. Consequently, reading the above evidence through the social capital conceptual perspective, it is clear that the nature of volunteering represented in this sporting community, including, to a limited extent, the wider community, coincides with the social capital model extracted for this sport and the respective processes imbued with such a model, in the form of increased social cohesion in the community of volunteers with the potential for it to spread to the wider local community.

It is, however, indispensable to again account for associations between norms of generalised reciprocity, the nature of volunteerism, the position of the sport in the wider sporting context and, in this respect, the consequences for social cohesion. The widely practiced generalised norms of reciprocity in this sport are key to its development. This aspect of social capital stands in the capacity of the key developmental resource that drives processes of participation in developmental endeavours resulting, amongst other things, in the maintenance of community cohesion, including a sense of belonging and the value of contributing. The link between the above categories, therefore, is direct in the context of this sporting community, however with a spreading potential imbued by external networking with the wider local community, touching upon associations between volunteer engagement and the community benefit, which is as evidence shows, undoubtedly diametrical.

Finally, the position of *emerging sport* in the context of the entire sporting system should not be overlooked when inspecting the nature of volunteering and its association to social capital and the relevant outcomes. While the moving force to further voluntarily participate in this sport is to stage it on a higher developmental level (I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.7; I2.9; I2.12; I2.14; I2.17), the meso contextual position of this sport fosters a generalisability of reciprocal norms, reflected in the stability of engagements— at least for the core volunteer staff in rugby league—thus affecting collaboration for a

common developmental mission mirrored in the dynamic notion of social cohesion, which is reflected in challenges to sustain and/or bolster trends of volunteerism in this sport.

7.2.3 'Doing for' the Community: A Wider Social Role for Rugby League?

In questioning the social role of rugby league in Serbia, it emerged that active civic participation, in the form of volunteering in the organisation of this sport, was complemented by an active civic involvement in the local community that engendered prospects for wider benefits. While contributing to local community welfare outside the realm of sport is allied to volunteer engagement in general, it belongs to the category 'doing for' a particular entity's development through the application of extended norms of generalised reciprocity. Although, as Putnam argues, doing good 'for' other people is not part of the definition of social capital, 'social networks provide the channels through which we recruit one another for good deeds, and social networks foster norms of reciprocity that encourage attention to others' welfare' (2000: 117). In this sense, as Putnam further argues, any sort of 'helping' or caring for those in need is strongly predicted by active civic engagement (ibid.). The narratives of research respondents suggest this relationship because, in line with Putnam's arguments (2000), civic engagement is self-accelerating—philanthropy and altruism depend more on the value accrued from social networking than on possession of financial capital.

Research data from this case study reveals that, although the sport's social responsibility endeavours are not strategically prescribed by the rugby league organisation (I2.9), the situational engagement in different sorts of formal or informal community support activities by particular individuals or groups of rugby league volunteers, seems to be one of the facets of extended volunteer engagement in and through this sport that causes social cohesion to be increasingly generated along rugby league activist-local community lines. Consequently, research participants highlighted that although socially responsible activities are generated in an *ad hoc* manner and are in their infancy stage, they revolve around contribution to a limited number of national and local community initiatives such as 'Bitka za bebe' (The Battle for the Babies)[16], 'Očistimo Srbiju' (Let's

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[16] 'Bitka za bebe' raises donations for maternity hospitals in order to increase prospects for higher standards of care for newborn babies (Fond B92, 2013)

Clean up Serbia)[17], organised blood donations in the local community, a charity tournament for 'Dečije selo' (Children's Village)[18] and an array of other individual initiatives:

> We have those activities of mutual assistance, of charity […] this is socially responsible work such as 'Bitka za bebe' or the thing that we worked on in Novi Sad for Dečije selo in Sremska Kamenica—this was a charity tournament and the idea was to bring some clothes, toys, food, money. My mother gave me 7-8 bags of everything to donate to those children there. (I2.2)

Furthermore, when discussing a wider social role for rugby league, interviewee I2.10 argues: 'We had blood donation initiatives […] we, rugby players from the University League clubs […]'. Or as stated by research participants I2.2 and I2.14, local altruistic initiatives encompass occasional aid through the local community churches as initiated by the team's coach, who studied for service in the church (I2.2; I2.14).

Consciousness of the value of support to those in the local community deprived on various bases, including the sporting community *per se*, yields altruistic practices that extend volunteer engagement in the community and in sport in a manner explained by respondent I2.2:

> Together with my friends, I will always make an effort and am trying to help when I hear that there is some family with financial problems and, believe me, there are a lot of people with huge problems in our local community who are in debt for electricity or rent or both, and this is terrible … so in this way we have a lot of initiatives and we are trying to help those families, to buy them some food or something […] Also I've been going to Leskovac to help those players there with some equipment or the like.

The above narrative was confirmed by an official from a southern Serbian club, based in the town of Leskovac, who adds that helping out those involved in this sport who are marginalised on poverty grounds is common practice: 'We're helping whenever we can and we are giving them what we are able to give, this was never a problem, never' (I2.4). Additionally, and as has been indicated in the preceding section, the same interviewee confirms informal engagement in the work of a local NGO that supports local development[19] through, amongst other things, the organisation of charity initiatives for particular groups of the population, extended the scope of local community contribution from this sport.

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[17] 'Očistimo Srbiju' (Let's Clean up Serbia), is an initiative by the Serbian Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection, that aimed to mobilise activities in local communities across Serbia in order to improve the environment (Ministarstvo energetike, razvoja i zaštite životne sredine, 2012),

[18] The Children's Village in Sremska Kamenica hosts orphans and children without parental care.

[19] Resurs Centar Leskovac, (2013) (The Leskovac Resource Centre) is an NGO that supports local development by engaging young people in different developmental spheres in the local community

On the other hand, although a sense of belonging to the local community is a driving force for philanthropic and altruistic attitudes, as was suggested by a significant number of respondents (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.7; I2.9; I2.11; I2.12; I2.14), the prospects for the increased outreach of sport in the local community were also amongst motivational forces to be engaged locally. A key official within the SRLF adds that while charity initiatives aim to contribute to local community development, they also affect the sport's profiling in the community involving norms of generalised reciprocity that presume potential future pay offs: 'We've been organising 'Očistimo Srbiju' [Let's Clean up Serbia] in order to clean up around here in the local community, because that way we [improve the] profile of our club, we promote ourselves as socially responsible' (I2.9). Still, whether a matter of sport promotion or not, local community contribution arises as an outcome of the above activism. As has been indicated, however, activism in this domain is a result of a sense of belonging to the local community, while networking in and through sport serves as a tool to act for mutual benefit. Thus, this does not indicate that sport has greater potential to recruit those willing to be civically active, it would be naïve to argue this, but that as a platform for civic engagement it has the potential to mobilise extended civic contribution because, just as other forms of civic involvement, altruism and philanthropy are closely tied to and encouraged by any kind of organisational, social and community involvement (Putnam, 2000: 120).

Yet, while participation in rugby league may potentially extend engagement in the local community for mutual benefit, at this point of rugby league's development in Serbia, including the wider social context it is embedded in, it can contribute to community development in only a limited scope, due to a lack of systematic planning of external engagement, which is mostly contextually and situationally bound and has an *ad hoc* character. In this vein, informant I2.11 argues that this is always a matter of individual activism:

> This is the result of individual initiative, which results in some more or less successful engagement, but in essence this is not immanent to the culture here in this country, it is at a very early phase […] so it is not that developed but maybe compared to other sports it is more developed.

Or, as research participant I2.14 states: 'Time will pass before this community story starts to be fully implemented here, but I'm doing what I can in order to contribute to some small-scale humanitarian initiatives here locally'.

Moreover, as repeatedly indicated by research participants and as highlighted previously in this thesis (see Section 7.2.2), the increased attainment of volunteers to 'do for' is

bound by unfavourable contextual settings, but also particularly by changes in the value systems caused by, amongst other things, increased generational fractures:

> We have initiatives, we have them but … we lack human resources, we lack volunteers who have a sort of social responsibility and who see a wider picture about the social context in this country. We can't do this on a steady basis and therefore we can't make better results in this sense … but we're trying really hard, still it is difficult. When we organised participation in the 'Očistimo Srbiju' initiative and invited all clubs to participate in this action in their local community, only a small number of players showed up here in *Dorćol*. These are not people who are in their thirties, these are young people 16-17 to 26-27 years old, but no, they don't understand this, you know. (I2.9)

In brief, although local community activism by rugby league members represents a small portion of community contribution, it still extends a web of connections, thus enforcing bridging practices that result in strengthening or developing increased social cohesion along the lines of the sporting and wider community cohorts as engagement in the community matters instils collaboration for community benefit as an overall mutual developmental aim. On the other hand, contributing to the local community's wellbeing by helping out those in need originates from, *inter alia*, a strongly developed 'sense of belonging' to the local community as a common identity marker relevant to the representatives of different social cohorts in Serbia (Mirkov, 2013). In this way, as this thesis argues, this is immanent to the rugby league community and is fostered by a pinch of motivation to further reproduce the image of 'local heroes', instilling strong local networks in the form of bonding social capital that, as a matter of fact, imbues community cohesion.

7.2.4 Masculine Identities as a Platform for Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion in Rugby League

Although the gender dimensions of social capital research in sport have received increased attention recently (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Spaaij, 2011, 2012, 2013), little has been written about the reproduction of masculine identities in sport as a platform for collective and/or individual social capital generation that retains engagement in the sport and the community. In contrast to the GFP, where gender regimes have not emerged as a significant issue in social capital creation and reproduction—excluding the motives of female participants of the programme to remain in this sport, which will be addressed in the sections to follow—it has emerged that in rugby league the forging of masculine identities has shaped the ways social capital is created, engagement in this sport sustained, and exclusion/inclusion practices exercised. It is also noteworthy,

however, that this aspect of social capital endeavours was not initially envisaged in the research design of this study and that it has emerged from the data, therefore, indispensable to accounting for in the form of inter-linkages between attainment factors to this sport and the place of cohesion and belonging to the community as social capital and civic engagement incubators. This finding partially corresponds with Spracklen's research on rugby league and the construction of community and masculinity in the context of northern England (1996).

Rugby (of both codes), as a heavy contact sport, is a game constructed around varying combinations of force and skill, including moral markers associated with ideals of courage, sacrifice, commitment to the team and exercise of physical force (Light and Kirk, 2000: 169). This includes the exercise of aggressive and violent acts that shape masculine identities within male groups (Blagojević, 2013) and the use of some prohibited, doping substances to enforce domination on (and off) the pitch.

Hence, drawing on these characteristics of rugby league and the interviewee narratives, it has emerged that displays of masculine identities serve as an instrument to enforce participation and voluntary engagement but also exclusion/inclusion along the degree of masculinity displayed in a 'specific social context', including elements of the 'crisis of masculinity' (Hughson, 2000, 2013a). According to sociologist Marina Blagojević, masculinities in Serbia are dually defined—within the context of the de-developmental processes of the semi-periphery that often invoke re-traditionalisation and re-patriarchalisation of men but also the transformation of hegemonic masculine identities posed by general trends of male emancipation in the global transnational context (2009a). Moreover, these dynamic processes of the creation of masculine identities in the Serbian context engender a disorientation of men's identities or a 'crisis of masculinity' that refers to their weakening social positions in the wider community through transformation of dominant masculine roles in the processes of 'transition'. (Hughson, 2013a; Blagojevć-Hughson, 2013b). According to evidence from this study, this on the one hand, underpins enforcement of hegemonic masculine characteristics in a particular social field, such as sport, while on the other hand it initiates a redefinition of masculine identities in this particular sport, through involvement in educational initiatives about gender issues in general and the Serbian context in particular (GI2.2; I3.4). Thus, in this context and in line with Hughson's (2013a) and Blagojević's arguments (2009a, 2012), it is necessary to speak of masculinities if we are to

understand social capital mechanisms in team sport, such as rugby league, that 'exists' around display and reproduction of 'masculinity'.

In that regard, when asked about reasons for engagement in this sport, all research participants in this case study repeatedly highlighted the link between the characteristics of this sport, comprising ideals of manliness, and the ways it forges feelings of community cohesion and satisfaction in that regard. One of them explained this as follows:

> You know, everybody has different reasons to be in rugby league, someone wants to show that he is a man, someone wants to show that he isn't a pussy, to show to his friends and most of them really succeed in this and someone is still a pussy but just needs to overcome this. But also the reason is a spirit of cohesion you can feel while playing or training. (I2.14)

It is clear, however, that different reasons for involvement in this sport are dominantly related to masculinity, including the level of cohesion borne out by involvement on the above principles. In a similar fashion, one of the interviewees highlights the importance of masculine-derived moral credentials to be involved in this sport:

> It is courage that is important in this game, it is not that one needs to be enormously strong or fast, but one must be brave enough to support a team mate, to be with him, and not to betray him ever, and this is a matter of trust because you simply need to confide yourself to your team mates and I think this is the most important [element] for remaining in this sport. (I2.16)

Correspondingly, an experienced rugby league official indicates that:

> It is necessary to be strong, and to be physically strong, to be punched and to punch, keeping up the collective spirit during the game and after … and rugby is the sort of game that keeps aggression on the pitch, not off [the pitch]. In any case, it is defined primarily by collective spirit, friendship and cohesion. (I2.20)

The above narratives are confirmed by all research respondents in a very lively and passionate way. Hence, it has become clear that forging masculine identities through networking with those who are part of this male sporting culture was strong social capital and associated outcomes instigator. In fact, while social capital generation, including active engagement in networks of relationships, represents a form of 'identity work' dependent on the matching up of multiple identities or, at least, some of them (Nichols et al., 2012; Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009), social capital endeavours in rugby league strongly bridge across a myriad of identity markers, placing 'manliness' as the primary one.

Moreover, interview accounts indicate that rugby league is a site for escapism from the 'crisis' of the 'transition' of men's social position, or the 'confusion' about this

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position—a niche to fully exercise hegemonic masculine values and moral credentials—or, as Blagojević-Hughson suggests, transition generally exacerbated the 'crisis of masculinity' just as re-patriarchalisation has increased the pressure on men to be the 'breadwinners' (2013b):

> I have found myself there [in rugby league] fully, and being involved in this sport felt so good, the ball, people, hanging out together, the sport itself. I was so attracted to all this and this is fully in line with my character, because this is a very specific sport and it is clearly determined who is and who isn't capable of playing it, in contrast to some other sports … and there is no single thing that will separate you from this sport once you're in, neither injuries, nor parents nor anything else. […] For our sport it is crucial that one has desire and heart. Why? Because I will work with the boy who is skinny, but has a strong desire, and is bold and is brave, I will work with him and the least problem is to put on weight and physique, this is easy, but heart and desire is something that you can't instil in someone. And my wish is to offer some kind of affirmation to those kids, to make them top players who will have some affirmation from this in life because, you see, here in our country there is so little space for any affirmation, so many constraints and you're constrained. I have a University diploma, but I work in public transport on ticket control, but when I'm training after work I accumulate all the energy back, it is brought back to me again. (I2.15)

Or as informant I2.18 suggests:

> People like to be a part of some family and, in addition, this is because this sport provokes this huge adrenalin rush … people become addicted to this, because this is a legal battle between people, a legal fight, and everybody is in need of that, but in a legal way and this is a huge vent.

Furthermore, interview accounts reveal that while the widespread use of both legal and prohibited substances (I2.1; I2.5; I2.7; I2.9; I2.10; I2.11; I2.12; I2.13; I2.14; I2.15; I2.17; I2.18) enforces domination (and violence) and respect on and off the pitch in a male group, it equally strengthens bonding practices through achieved results on the pitch, and adds to the 'quality' of masculinity in this sport. In referring to the latter, interviewee I2.9 states: 'There are some players who gather around the use of different legal and illegal substances, this connects them'. Or as pointed by I2.16: 'I believe there is [doping], but it isn't as widespread as in professional sport. This is amateur [sport] and people take it because of themselves, not because of inclinations to advance professionally in sport'. Significantly, research participant I2.18 attests that a great majority of those involved in the sport use some kind of doping substances or supplements, and adds: 'This is true, it is not that important what they use, but this is the basis, and the sport depends on this and this is true'. While taking substances 'for oneself' resonates with intentions for enforcing the feeling of domination through achieved results on the pitch, thus reproduction of masculine identities, it also adds to reproduction of the cultural elements of social capital in this sport, including emotions,

as an addition to theoretical constructs of social capital present in the literature. Research participant I2.15 describes this as follows:

> You know you get that specific feeling when you play rugby. When I score, I get such a rush of adrenalin and I am the strongest man on earth at that moment, and I won … and that feeling when you score can't be compared to any other feeling on earth … and that kind of respect between the teammates, you respect him as a brave man who stands there and goes to battle and you must respect him. And you won't let him be beaten, you'll sacrifice yourself for him and this is characteristic for rugby league and there is no such thing in other sports, that kind of respect, trust and love. We need to love each other.

While recognition through masculine identity enables the creation of social relations that generate social capital and engagement in this sport, it also places various regimes of exclusion or ignorance towards those who do not fully abide to the principles of 'manliness'. This notably referrers to the endeavours of testing the power and domination of those strongly exercising orthodox masculinities towards newcomers and those who do not abide to norms of masculinity in this sport:

> There were a couple of bothersome guys in the past few years who humiliated newcomers or those who might threaten their position of 'alpha male' and what was worse with this type of behaviour [was that it] became normal … Simply they like to do this, to be arrogant and … everybody likes some kind of power, because when you know that there is someone weaker in the team you like to be seen as the 'alpha male'. And, you know, there are always a couple of guys who have been bullied by others. And for some, the reason for coming to rugby was to bully the others. But there are situations when someone is tall and strong but is a pussy and this irritates the rest of the team because you can't expect anything from such a guy and obviously he becomes subject to bullying. But the coach resolves this with a fight. He calls those guys to get into a fight and to prove whatever they need to prove. (I2.1)

While the tone of the above narrative was widely present throughout the interview process, the initiatives to sanction this type of subordination or exclusionary attitude have been undertaken in certain teams by the relevant management structures, so as to re-regulate the social atmosphere in particular clubs and to foster the engagement of its members in developmental matters in this sport (I2.1; I2.3; I2.5; I2.7; I2.8; I2.9; I2.11; I2.15; I2.17; I2.18).

In addition, it is worth noting that the generation of social cohesion in and around this sport is associated with the reaffirmation of male identities through attitudes towards the gay population and women, albeit in a changing or transformative manner because, as will be disused subsequently, dominant masculine patterns are subject to vivid transformations that are contextually and situationally driven (Anderson and McGuire, 2010; Blagojević, 2012; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Spracklen, 1996). Therefore, while the majority of interviewees argued that issues of discrimination of the

gay population are irrelevant for the interview conversation as there is no gay population in rugby league in Serbia, one of the informants added:

> There is no such thing here, at least that I know of … still we're Balkan men so this is specific here. Rugby is a man's game. Now, sincerely if someone would come … this is my opinion, now this is really sensitive, I don't know … but I wouldn't have problem with this as long as he didn't impose those themes … or if he acts in the way 'I know that you are straight, I am gay but I don't want to bother you with my story'—this wouldn't be a problem, otherwise … it would be a problem […] but at the end so what? He's a man as well. And on the pitch he must be a man, not a 'pussy'. (I2.12)

While this narrative suggests partial tolerance towards homosexuality in this sport, indicating a diminishing degree of homophobia in relation to participation in rugby league, it equally raises barriers to the maintenance of bonding practices through potential interaction with a gay player in the team or in other structures within the sport, which assists the reproduction of the social marginalisation of the gay population around this sport (Anderson and McGuire, 2010). However, challenges to shift from orthodox to more inclusive masculinity in rugby league are posed. Namely, rugby league officials who perform multiple roles in the sport, interviewed in a group interview reveal: 'I know some people from gay circles and I told them to find some friends to come and play rugby and that they could play and stay there if they were ready to be beaten' (GI2.2.1) while GI2.2.2 continues:

> The gay population is more than welcome. I think that it is not even necessary to accentuate this. We have [in the club] a couple of them, still in the closet … but you know … what can you do … but the guys in the club are ok, no one would be bullied because of his gay orientation.
>
> **GI2.2.1:** They learned to accept it through 'Budi muško' [Be a Man].
>
> **GI2.2.2:** 'Budi muško' helped a lot and everyone is welcome. The door of our club is open to all.

On that note, external networking and involvement of particular rugby league clubs with a non-sport NGO, Centre E8, that implements (informal) the social and educational initiative 'Be a Man' and 'The Young Men Initiative' (Young Men Initiative, 2012) in partnership with a consortium of NGO bodies across the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Hughson, 2013a) has launched a slight transformation in 'traditional' masculine values, especially with regard to gender equality, homophobia and issues of violence. Hence, these programmes are designed to steer young men from deviant social behaviour and to be respectful and tolerant citizens (ibid.; Young Men Initiative, 2012). Still the transformation of dominant values in the particular social context requires time and sustainability because, as an official from the organisation who has been involved in workshops with rugby league players states: 'Their attitude towards the gay

population is rigid, but still there is some progress in that regard. The younger [players] are more rigid than older ones, they are very rigid, but this is slowly prone to change' (I3.4). This also corresponds to what Radoman (2013) indicates is a product of the dominant public discourse on homosexuality and the role of right-wing (youth) organisations in promoting homophobia. Identities are always in flux (Anderson and McGuire, 2010), however, so the changing nature of masculinity in this sport, although being in its infancy, is impacted by, *inter alia*, active participation in external networking of a particular rugby league club with non-sport organisations concerned with issues of masculinity in Serbia and the Balkans. On that note, voluntary engagement of rugby league members in cooperation with external partners, aiming to achieve collective aims such as positive change of masculine values, sets up prospects for increased social cohesion in the overlapping communities involved. Likewise, social capital generated in this particular context may be seen as a contributor to transformative processes of the masculine values practiced in this sport.

Ultimately, attitudes towards women in this sport do not exhibit significant misogynistic behaviour. The position of the researcher, as a woman, in this case study, may also contribute to partial confirmation of this. Although, in the majority of cases there were no comments with regard to the link between the researcher's gender and her interest in researching rugby league, there were a limited number of respondents from opposing age cohorts who have been surprised by the fact that women would be interested in this 'exclusively' male sport (I2.2; I2.5; I2.12; GI2.1). However, while comments of 'surprise' have not been gender derogative, they have pointed to the rather opposite visual identity expectations informants have had compared to the researcher. In that regard, one group of respondents who belong to the generation of players active in the first phase of the game's development in Serbia, could not hide their surprise when meeting the researcher: 'I'm surprised that someone who looks like you, Miss … you look like a ballerina, can be interested in this sport' (GI2.1.4). Moreover, some representatives of a younger age cohort have been curious about the researcher's motives, from a gender perspective, to engage in this study (I2.2; I2.5; I2.12).

But, while discussion about attitudes towards women in general and their role in this sport in particular, has not revealed any discriminatory practices on the part of the rugby league members, it has pointed to a lack of interest shown by women in this sport, due to the game's characteristics, which has limited their formal engagement in the sport, with the exception of mothers who act in the capacity of 'caregivers', thus reproducing

traditional roles of women in this field (I2.1; I2.3). As has been argued, however, the future expansion of this sport, in the form of touch rugby, will enable increased inclusiveness of all population categories, including girls and women (I2.2; I2.5; GI2.2) but is yet to occur. On the other hand, discussion with one interviewee (I2.5) has revealed that, while the involvement of women in touch rugby may open up the space for women's increased inclusion in this sport, it may equally impact upon the sexual objectification of those women involved. Still these attitudes remained confined to this one interview:

> I think that having a women's team is a great motivation for the boys, of course they [women] would play touch rugby without contact … they would entertain the spectators and cheer the boys on to perform better … And the women's team is free marketing for a rugby club … notably if a club has attractive girls, now this may sound ugly, but everybody likes to see this, but also some bigger and tougher, less attractive girls wouldn't be restricted to join too and this is free publicity and a free magnet … and this breaks taboos about rugby.

This narrative thus has dual interpretative potentials. It firstly reveals inclinations for the inclusion of women in the sport, which, on the one hand, may be understood as opening up the gates of a strictly male group to involvement of 'others', while on the other, it shows that the underlying aim for this inclusion is associated with the sexual objectification of girls, a means of motivating male participation this sport.

In completing the picture of the above issue, excerpts from field notes made on a trip to Leskovac, where a tournament of junior rugby league teams was held, indicate that young male attitudes portray indications of gender discrimination but also the traces of misogyny:

> In the middle of the journey [by bus], the drivers changed. The new driver was a woman. In this moment almost all the boys in the bus began to yell and shout in surprise, while some of them, although said as joke, commented that they didn't want to remain on the bus anymore [because of the woman driver]. Moreover, during the journey some of them called girls bitches and texted them with insulting messages that I heard as they were reading them out loud. (Field notes, 11 January 2013)

Thus, empirically speaking, although misogynistic behaviour is spotted in and around this sport in the Serbian context, it is in a state of flux, moving towards positive change through the application of more gender-inclusive attitudes. These findings correspond, to a certain extent, with what Anderson and McGuire found in their research about inclusive masculinities exercised in the context of British school rugby (2010).

Ultimately, the engagement of certain rugby league clubs in networks of relationships with regard to non-formal educational initiatives pursued by NGO partners, as

previously indicated, informed the transformation of attitudes towards gender equality, including the curbing of misogynistic behaviour (GI2.2; I3.4). In that regard, an NGO trainer involved in working with rugby league players, suggested that compared to other youth categories involved in this initiative, rugby league players displayed higher levels of tolerance and understanding of the above issues, which further improved during the course of the training (I3.4). As he further indicates:

> For them there is no single situation when it is okay to be violent against a woman, they strongly disapprove of it and that's it … their opinion about women is that women are [physically] weaker, but not inferior […] so they have a firm base from which to learn more about [the subject] and to apply [what they have] learned. (I3.4)

Hence, according to the research data, while the reproduction of a predominantly hegemonic masculinity, in response to processes of a 'crisis of masculinity' in the broader social context, is one of the significant means for exercising bonding practices, including voluntary engagement in this sport, the reproduction of transformative masculine identities in this sport through involvement in external networking with non-sport partners working on positive youth development, has the potential to extend social cohesion and, thus, contribute to multiple community benefits.

7.3 Social Inclusion and Social Integration as Measures of Social Cohesion in and through Established and Emerging Sports

Participation and access to citizens' rights is at the core of social inclusion and social integration processes (see Chapter 2). Social inclusion and integration resonate, therefore, with the empowerment of individuals or groups to widen the scope of social participation through engagement in a given social field that will potentially affect their social position and enrich their social experience (Waring and Mason, 2010). In this vein, processes of social inclusion and social integration may be understood as a path to social cohesion or, as was previously discussed in this thesis, its indicators.

Accordingly, in an attempt to clarify the link between the social capital model generated in a particular sport (see Chapter 6), and its socially inclusive and integrative endeavours, this section will work towards investigation of inclusionary practices and the resulting outcomes *in* and *through* sport, with regard to different scale deprived population categories—the poor, the intellectually disabled, ethnic minorities, and girls/women—who, in the Serbian context, are either experiencing different levels of barriers to participation in sport and/or are facing limits to wider social participation.

Before discussing the state of inclusionary and integrative events in the researched sports in more detail, however, it is worth briefly noting that the sport professionals and sport policy actors interviewed have acknowledged that although inclusionary practices in and through sport have in general gained currency in Serbia recently, especially with respect to the inclusion of disabled participants and the somewhat increased participation of girls in traditionally 'male' sports (such as football), the doors to participation by those suffering poverty and ethnic discrimination are still not open:

> There is no real inclusion in sport nowadays. Okay, there is slight inclusion of the disabled, but the other [deprived] communities … they don't have access. And this is seen through the example of the Roma community, without money they can't access even recreational activities, before it was possible, before '91 […] so without access there is no inclusion […] There are more girls in football though but this is at the very beginning here. (I4.3)

In a similar vein, respondent I4.4 asserts that sport in Serbia suffers from de-development because: 'the doors for the poor and Roma children are closed because the costs of access are huge […] so the first thing that should be done is to open up the doors for the poor and this can be done only through the state's supportive incentives'. These views have resonated throughout the majority of research participant narratives from the above groups (I4.1; I4.2; I4.5; I3.2; I3.3; I3.5).

Thus, the issue of deprivation, in the Serbian context, that restricts access to sport is seen as necessary to be addressed through the coordinated action of multiple stakeholders in the process, so as to remove (systemic) barriers to inclusion in sport and wider community networks of those marginalised on multiple grounds, in order to enable prospects for wider community benefit. Correspondingly, as all respondent groups widely reported, it is not discrimination of the particular population categories in the field of sport that prevents their inclusion in and through sport, rather the issue of a lack of strategies for 'empowerment' of those deprived groups to be integrated. As interviewee I4.4 states:

> Well, you can't see discrimination in sport. I think there is no discrimination. Roma people unfortunately … as they are not integrated generally, so they are not integrated into sport either, but you know it is not that they're not accepted by others, this is more like that they should be willing to be active in that integration.

Still, while the above accounts may only scratch the surface of the issue of social inclusion and integration and, thus, the potential for increased social cohesion in the wider community in and through sport, they may introduce us to the context of social inclusion processes in and through sport that is to be further tested through evidence

gathered in the investigation of established and emerging sports in the sections to follow.

7.3.1 Social Inclusion and Social Integration Practices in and through the Grassroots Football Programme

The key principles of UEFA's Grassroots Football philosophy in relation to social inclusion, social capital and social cohesion in and through sport, refer to the openness of the game for all, including the development of relationships and positive social values through participation in football (UEFA, 2004: 7). Thus, the GFP in Serbia, although committed to the global (or, at least, European) vision of the grassroots football movement, imposed in a top-down manner, strives to define its role in locally situated socially inclusive endeavours through programmed inclusion of different population groups that experience a lack of access to participation in football.

The narratives of research participants and a review of official documents suggest that while some initiatives by partnership projects, such as the Special Olympics' Unified Sport and the OFFS, have been concerned with inclusion and integration of particular population categories in and through sport for more than a decade before joining the GFP, the activities implemented by the Network of Coordinators directly engaged by the FAS's Grassroots Football Department have only moderately covered the above issues due to still weak programme structures, organisational practices and the programme's priorities in that regard. However, while investigating the above issues a comprehensive outlook of the processes of social inclusion and integration in and through this sport programme has been taken, with a view of consequences for inner and wider social cohesion, accounting for the model of social capital generated at the level of the programme's beneficiaries and programme officials, as discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

The inability to participate in grassroots sport activities as a consequence of economic deprivation is a form of social exclusion (Kelly, 2011). Moreover, in the Serbian social context, those deprived on the basis of disability and/or on ethnic grounds are, in most cases, also economically deprived. Yet, as suggested by the majority of the research participants, access to sport provision is an indispensable first step to be made as a contribution to continuous sport development and increased social inclusion of those excluded on the basis of a lack of financial capital. To a certain extent, this programme

seeks to fill this void. One interviewee volunteering in the FAS's Network of Coordinators indicates that the issue of economic deprivation needs to be addressed because:

> Nowadays, you need to pay for membership and parents don't have [enough] and this is one of the problems … and the equipment is pricy … Before, the club was donating the equipment. When I was young, I paid neither for membership nor for equipment, but now it is difficult … Now everybody is concerned with their own financial interests … And we try to address this through our programme. (I1.14)

This narrative indicates that financial deprivation directly affects sport development at the grassroots level, while individual interests (including the economic hardships of those concerned with sport provision) constrain engagement in broader strategies for sport development and inclusion in and through sport. Yet, shifting the focus to developing sport through engagement in long-term cooperation with (primary) schools in order to assist in the free provision of sport to all children, may impact on the removal of barriers to participation that arise from individual interests of those involved in the organisation of grassroots football activities mostly in football clubs or football schools. When asked about strategies to deal with decreased participation in sport due to the economic deprivation of a significant number of children in Serbia (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2011a), a high-ranking programme official said:

> The 'My School—My Club' project offers access to sport to those who are exempt from sporting activities notably because they don't have money to pay membership fees to the club or are not talented enough to comply with the criteria of selection in clubs, so in this way and with this project we are resolving issues of inclusion by enabling free access to football for those children who are not able to pay. (I1.4)

Clearly, the programme's activities, in the above regard, may foster inclusionary practices in order to contribute to the widening of sport participation through the coordinated actions of multiple stakeholders, thus impacting on sport community benefits, however, in a still blurred capacity because structural barriers to participation, such as the availability of adequate facilities or equipment in the schools may only be addressed in a limited scope: 'Working conditions in schools are a huge problem. Moreover, we don't have equipment … we are very poor' (I1.15). Thus, the prospect of overcoming the structural barriers to broader inclusion in football activities is dependent on broader contextual factors that only in a limited scope can be impacted directly by this initiative.

Moreover, the OFFS, a grassroots football partnership initiative committed to openness, equality, community and social cohesion, (see Chapter 5) envisaged to be achieved through a non-selective approach to participation in the organisation of football events,

locally touches on inclusionary practices in relation to economic deprivation at the level of the programme as a whole. According to a research participant engaged in this initiative:

> There is no selectivity in this initiative. It is available to all, boys and girls, and there is no talent selection, all are welcome. The first thing is to include as many children as possible in sport. Secondly, this initiative, unlike others … well, there is no commercialisation [of sport], there are no membership fees, besides, children who participate in our events get some equipment. So it is available to everybody. The focus is on the child. And this is very much needed nowadays here because we have these schools of football … which is pure commercialisation [of children's sport]. (GI1.1.3)

Or as interviewee I1.13, also involved in the work of the OFFS, indicates:

> We attract children who were not involved in football previously. And the aim is not to start to train in football but to get involved in sport, and to start to do any sport once the event is finished, basketball, handball, just to be involved in something […] In the majority of municipalities there were previously no adequate facilities for work with children, but after the OFFS's events and the donation of equipment, work with children was revived again.

While confirming the former narrative with regard to the attraction of children who have previously not been involved in sport—most notably due to issues of economic disadvantage—to participate in OFFS events, the latter interviewee account indicates that the initiative addressed structural barriers in order to widen local participation trends in sport. While challenging structural barriers was one of the project's priorities with regard to the long-term increase of participation trends, which was confirmed by other interviewees (I1.9; GI1.1), and the project's official statistics about the amount of donated equipment—38,500 footballs, for example (OFFS, 2011), empirical evidence about the local impact and sustainability of participation of children in football resulting from this initiative is not available as the tools for impact evaluation have been developed only recently (CCPA/Krueger, 2013).

On the other hand, data about the involvement of economically deprived children in this initiative in Serbia in 2011 appears to be relative as only 269 children at risk of poverty and 2,071 children who have not previously been members of football clubs, presumably but not exclusively due to financial constraints, have participated in the OFFS's five days sporting events (OFFS, 2011: 23).

Another understanding of inclusive participation or 'sport for all' relates to the provision of sport for 'excluded groups' (Kelly, 2011). Several initiatives within this programme have assisted the inclusion and cultural integration in sport and the community of those deprived on both economic and ethnic grounds, such as the Roma

population in Serbia (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2012). As was reported by interviewee I1.9:

> The intention is to include poor children and Roma children who are, as you know, very poor … and I've been involved in this for eight years now and have never seen any problem with regard to Roma inclusion, the things that I hear [on the pitch] are rather, 'hey you, chubby, pass that ball' or something similar, but no, there is no discrimination of the Roma who participate in the event.

This narrative suggests that the inclusion into sport of deprived categories of children may foster inner social cohesion processes, as bonding among children is not dependent on deprivation identity markers. Moreover, according to interviewee I1.13, the involvement of coaches of Roma ethnic origin into grassroots football initiatives acts positively on extended inclusion and resulting cohesion within the sporting community: 'We try to have at least one Roma coach who can bring in Roma children and this works great. Down south [in Serbia] there are a lot of Roma and they're great, it works great with other children'.

Although it has been widely heralded that the inclusion of Roma into sport is one of the programmes' prominent social aspects (I1.4; I1.5; I1.6; I1.8; I1.9; I1.13; I1.14; GI1.1), evidence on the participation rate of this population category across the programme as a whole is scarce. On the other hand, where they do exist, data indicates that inclusion of the Roma population was insignificant in affecting positive changes in the sport and the wider community. Namely, the data from the OFFS's Report on Project Implementation Activities indicates that in 2011 only 1.28 percent of the Roma population was included into OFFS's events or 39 Roma participants out of a total of 3,047 participants for that year (OFFS, 2011: 22). This may suggest that the limited social inclusion of the deprived population has a limiting effect on forging relational practices that resonate with social capital generation, and so scarcely affects processes of increased social cohesion within the domain of interethnic cooperation.

Yet, the strategy related to one of the initiatives to be implemented in the domain of Roma integration in and through the GFP is controversial, however, as it aims to establish mono-ethnic Roma clubs that are to be involved in the programme. This resonates with what Elling and her colleagues call 'competitive integration' or competition between the deprived and mainstream populations (2001), which may, on one hand, foster direct integration into sport but equally may increase disintegrative processes in the wider community. The initiative called 'Fudbal mala' (Football

Mahala)[20], that has been referred to during the interviews, strives to assist enhanced Roma integration into the GFP by establishing new Roma clubs and fostering interaction between the Roma community and football clubs in the local community: 'The intention is to bring local football clubs and the local Roma community together and to establish Roma-only football clubs. This enables the involvement of Roma children in regular [sporting] activities' (I1.4). Moreover, as stipulated by the same research respondent, there are already mono-ethnic clubs involved in the Mini-maxi league tournaments in the south of Serbia that impact upon the integration strategies of this programme. Yet, although the foundation of mono-ethnic clubs assists in sport development and the greater inclusion of marginalised populations in sport, it prevents on the other hand, bridging across ethnic divides within the sporting and wider communities and has only limited potential to affect mechanisms fostering social cohesion in these communities. Finally, as Kelly argues, inclusionary sport initiatives must engage with socio-structural aspects of exclusion—factors that are mostly beyond the scope of sport-based intervention (2011). In the case of the inclusion of the Roma population into sport, strategies to engage with broader aspects of exclusion have not been formulated in coordination with all relevant stakeholders in this process, thus undermining the sustainability and long-term impact of inclusion in the above domain. Moreover, the resulting trend of Roma inclusion in the GFP is, in the short term, a product of non-systematically pursued initiatives, the lack of sustainable cooperation between partnership projects characterised by an inability to overcome structural holes existing between them, resulting in the circulation of bonding social capital at the level of the organisation (see Chapter 6) and, in some respects, the early phase of the programme's development in Serbia (I1.10; I1.4; I1.5; I1.6I1.8; I1.7; I1.12; I1.14).

On the other hand, the site for broadening the space for generation of social cohesion in and through sport lies in the inclusion of girls and intellectually disabled children and young people into football activities. At the strategic level, the GFP is committed to including girls and intellectually disabled children, and the majority of research participants have especially stressed commitment to the equal participation of girls in the programme (I1.3; I1.4; I1.5; I1.6; I1.7; I1.8; I1.9; I1.10; I1.11; I1.12; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15; GI1.1). This is fully in compliance with UEFA's grassroots philosophy that is specifically oriented towards the increasing inclusion of girls and intellectually disabled children into grassroots initiatives, which also acts as an indicator in the evaluation of

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[20] *Mahala* is commonly used word in various Balkan languages, to refer to informal Roma settlements.

the programme development at the national level, including the programme's positioning internationally, and is linked with the programme's financial sustainability (UEFA, 2004).

In the domain of achieving gender equality, as a partnership initiative, the OFFS, for example, is committed to the promotion of female participation in football at all levels, comprising a minimum of 25 percent of female players, coaches, leaders and officials included in the initiative (Udsholt and Nicolajsen, 2011). Moreover, 'My School – My Club' seeks to engage 30 to 50 percent of girls into football activities through networking with primary schools across Serbia (I1.4; I1.5). While, as has been reported, the involvement of female participants is steadily increasing at the level of the programme as a whole, there are varying degrees of success within particular initiatives under the GFP umbrella. Nonetheless, access to football and interest in football have swelled recently due to two main factors: a) the systematic outreach activities of the GFP, stressing equal access to sport participation for all, and b) the general breaking down of cultural barriers in the community that previously prevented girls from being actively involved in football. In that regard, one of the leading programme officials states: 'The participation of girls is increasing. There are more and more women playing football globally and this indirectly affects increasing participation here' (I1.4). In a similar vein, respondent I1.13 indicates:

> In the past few years the participation proportion is 50 percent participation of girls and 50 percent of boys. During the most recent events organised in Surdulica, Vladičin Han and Bosilegrad between 88 and 90 participants were girls out of a total of 192 participants, which was really positive.

Increasing participation of girls in grassroots football events in localities in the south of Serbia is even more significant considering the fact that cultural constraints related to the involvement of girls in 'traditionally male' sports dominate in these contexts: 'Each contact girls have with football provokes a kind of … how to say … disapproval from the local community and on the part of some parents' (I1.10). Hence, as was reported, efforts in changing the attitudes of the general population towards the inclusion of girls in football activities should further be stimulated, particularly in those communities that are at the developmental periphery. And yet again, does a sport programme have the capacity to alter instilled, local, social and cultural values towards gender roles that can possibly produce new forms of social relations? This question appears relevant in order to situate the impact of this sporting initiative on wider social cohesion. But although structural changes in the scope of girls participating in football imparted by this

programme have been steadily promoted, if the programme as (an institutional) promoter of new social relations and norms to be established fails to impose itself as a recognisable and meaningful actor for change, the existing normative and relational patterns (Lazić and Cvejić, 2007) in this micro cultural sphere will probably continue to operate.

Still, while some initiatives are committed to increasing social cohesion by including girls into mixed-gender teams, the majority of initiatives are focused on the establishment of mono-gender teams, with limited potential to affect increased cross-gender social cohesion in and through sport. For instance, an interviewee explained that efforts for the inclusion of girls into grassroots football are undertaken so as to allow the participation of female teams in the Mini-maxi League, a separate league for girls (I1.6).

Ultimately, the evidence emerging from interviews indicates that the increasing participation of girls in football is not driven by motives of competition or of becoming professional athletes but rather the inclination to make friends and participate in the team so as to achieve a sense of community and cohesion. (I1.4). Besides, as reported, girls easily embrace 'others' as 'us', creating prospects for increased bridging social capital and consequently greater social cohesion (I1.4; I1.9; I1.13). This fact directly resonates with the principles of connectivity strategies employed by female participants in the programme and the effects on the social capital model, including the resulting processes of cohesion in and through the sporting community. It also acknowledges that football may be an appropriate locale for girls to cultivate social capital in their sporting community and expand it to the wider local scope. This again calls for attention to be paid to the issues of the gendered characteristics of social capital generation and distribution because, as argued by Spaaij, gender is still a structuring principle of social interaction in sporting spaces (2013).

Lastly, in completing the discussion about the integration of disadvantaged population groups in and through sport, the position of intellectually disabled children and young people needs to be addressed further. As research data reveals, there have been two separate initiatives: one directly implemented by the FAS's Network of Coordinators, concerning the interaction between the regular population and disabled youth through various initiatives organised in local communities, and another related to a partnership initiative—the Unified Sports programme of the Special Olympics Serbian Charter,

which deals exclusively with empowering young people with intellectual disabilities through sport programmes, including football (see Chapters 5 and 6). Both initiatives, therefore, rely on interaction of regular and intellectually disabled populations through sport in an attempt to increase social cohesion among those respective groups in the local community. In addition, they foster and extend bonds among this particular deprived population, enabling them to further interact in their local community through sport. This serves as an instrument through which children and young people with intellectual disabilities are able to better connect with the regular population in their local communities. In this respect interviewee I1.3 states:

> The Unified Sport Initiative was designed to provide all of the children involved with the possibility to make friends through training and through the activities they take part in before and after training. Before and after tournaments they get together in a hotel, in their rooms, they go out together, and then we have initiated, for example, that they even go together to get a haircut.

While clearly interaction through football activities between the above groups extends the radius of bridging social capital, the essence of connectivity strategies is rooted in friendship between different groups and particularly between children with intellectual disabilities (I1.3), thus contributing to previous discussions about the model of social capital in this domain, as presented in Chapter 6. Likewise, as stated by interviewee I1.3, those involved in this initiative, both regular and disabled groups of children and young people are treated equally in the initiative: 'Both [groups of participants] have the same rights and obligations. And what I'm trying to say is that it is not as bad as people think'.

Moreover, the same respondent pointed out the issue of recognition of sporting results, or the issue of sporting 'ability' of this group of participants, as significant in increasing inclusion through sport in the local community: 'From the very beginning [of this initiative] I was inclined to achieve something that no one was able to achieve before. I wanted them to be treated as athletes in the community, to be recognisable and valued through their sporting results'. This fact resonates with findings from the Evaluation Report of the Unified Sports Programme in Europe/Eurasia, which indicates that the opportunity to play in competitions, to represent the club and the local community or a country provides 'an interference through which the wider public can connect with individuals with intellectual disabilities' (Dowling et al., 2010b: 84). Importantly however, extending the radius of recognition of this population group through their inclusion in football and, thus, into the community also comes from forging networking practices with the LSGs representatives:

> We started an initiative with the local community 4-5 years ago to select the best athlete with an intellectual disability. And this was received with great enthusiasm. We succeeded in this because we were very persistent. Somehow local communities recognised it as a very important initiative for their town [or] municipality, for society in general. (I1.3)

In the above outlined terms, recognition therefore strengthens the contribution made by Unified Sports to a positive change of attitudes towards this population group in the wider community. Moreover, building alliances in the community around this population group engaged in sport further bolsters recognition, while sustainably driving the processes of social inclusion through sport:

> This is sustainable, it is sustainable [because] if you ask me whether society pays attention to these children—yes, and it increases every day. If you ask me whether we are better off today—yes, we are. But do we need more [recognition and attention]— yes, we do! (I1.3)

While the issue of the sustainability of the initiative is clearly associated with recognition in the local community and, thus, processes of 'acceptance', at the core of its sustainability are collaborative and cooperative practices implemented at various levels in and around the initiative that can potentially lead to an increase of socially cohesive processes. This applies to cooperational practices established between partners in the GFP working in the same domain. We have seen that inner partnership relations in the programme are insufficiently developed (see Chapter 6). In this vein, initiatives that target the intellectually disabled population for inclusion in this programme are sequenced and, hence, lack the implementation of coordinated strategies. Interviewee accounts show that, in the above regard, cooperation strategies are not even planned to be programmed in the short-term, which may undermine the overall prospects for sustainability and the extension of socially cohesive processes in this field.

Therefore, although the FAS's GFP Network of Coordinators is concerned with forging the integration and inclusion of the intellectually disabled in the programme, these initiatives are in their infancy phase with a dearth of evidence about their impact on processes of inclusion. Still, social interaction between regular and deprived population groups was the first step in these processes:

> Our Network of Coordinators is tasked with connecting football clubs and/or schools involved in this programme with clubs or institutions for intellectually disabled youth and children. They [the members of the Network] need to organise visits to these institutions where children from both population groups will socialise through some joint football activities. (I1.4)

More precisely, regular interaction between the two population groups through the implementation endeavours by the GFP's Network of Coordinators is to be achieved through the following:

> Monthly visits by coordinators are expected to be organised, meaning that each coordinator will organise 12 visits per year, and if we know that there are 30 coordinators [one national, four regional and 25 county coordinators], this equals 360 visits per year in total and this is a huge step in the interaction with and the empowerment of this population. (I1.6)

The practice of regular interaction and involvement of disabled children in sport and the community can certainly raise 'awareness' and alter the 'attitudes' of the local community towards the involvement of and interaction with this population group. Consequently, it may have positive effects for generating bridges between stakeholders involved in this interaction and impact on community cohesion because, as Long and Sanderson indicate, 'some of the community cohesion comes through changing attitudes […] as a result of sharing an interest in sport or facilitating participation' (2001: 195).

Overall, the processes of inclusion and integration, including the removal of structural barriers for participation in and through sport, and the benefits that accrue from these processes are closely intertwined (Long and Sanderson, 2001). Moreover, at the heart of these processes, thus the benefits that may accrue are, as shown, the development of inter-relational strategies or networking and cooperation between the various stakeholders involved. We have seen in Chapter 6 that networking practices between the programme's beneficiaries presume the forging of dense ties, often based on friendships that have a great impact on children's sense of belonging to communities (Walseth, 2008) and contributing to the engendering of prevalently bonding social capital. Again, as repeatedly shown, this is linked with the fact that the generation of social capital is a type of identity work in the field of sport (Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009). In other words, while initial 'othering' by the means of participation in sport may be reduced by crossing the bridges between 'unlike us' groups through sporting interaction, it is usually further suppressed by the transformation of weak to dense social ties that resonate with the building of common identities through sport. Thus, as evidence from this study suggests, the fostering of inclusionary processes that resonate with community benefits is achievable through the bonding social capital model. Still, although comprehensively approached, inclusionary processes are enacted through this programme, their greater impact—including the sustainability of these processes—is undermined (again) by the circulation of predominantly bonding social capital at the organisational level of the programme (see Chapter 6). Hence, the lack of cooperation

between initiatives that cover the same area, as shown earlier, results in diminishing prospects for wider social inclusion in and through the GFP. On the other hand, the involvement of community representatives in the programme's activities, for example LSG officials, may raise the impact of sequenced inclusionary initiatives for greater community benefit and the sustainability of the processes. Ultimately, in the view of this study, there is evidence enough to suggest that community benefits, in the form of increased social integration and inclusion, can be generated by grassroots football initiatives. Still, this is possible only on a limited scale due, on the one hand, to structural, systemic and cultural barriers for inclusion in direct relation to broader sporting and social context and on the other hand, due to the nature of organisational, networking and collaborative practices forged in and through this programme. As Long and Sanderson assert, sport programmes may sufficiently affect changes at the individual and sporting community level, while the case for broader community benefits through integrative actions is still of a limited scope (2001).

7.3.2 Bridging National and Ethnic Divides through the Grassroots Football Programme in the Western Balkans

Although the focus of this research is on the development of Serbian communities through established and emerging sport, regional cooperation through the GFP seems to be indicative, in this context, of the overall discussion of community benefits. Namely, as was suggested earlier (see Chapter 5), two partnership initiatives of the GFP, the OFFS and the B.A.A.P., were concerned with regional cooperation with the aim of supporting processes of bridging the existing national and ethnic divides by means of promoting intercultural dialogue and reconciliation in the post-conflict areas of the Western Balkans. At the core of these processes is the renewal of the minimum levels of trust necessary to foster mutual cooperation across dividing lines (SDP IWG, 2008). These initiatives, as confirmed by the relevant research participants (I1.1; I1.9; I1.13; GI1.1), appear to be at stake in assisting reconciliation processes through children's sporting activities in the post-conflict setting. The use of football here is particularly symbolic as this sport is associated with the previous (and one may say current) intensification of nationalistic divides among populations in the former Yugoslavia. Thus, according to interview respondents' accounts, the above initiatives encouraged inter-ethnic dialogue and cooperation among Balkan ethnicities and nationalities involved in the football events organised throughout the region.

An official from the B.A.A.P. project indicates that the aim of the initiative is to foster the mobility of beneficiaries within the Balkans through sport, so as to raise awareness of peaceful coexistence, tolerance and intercultural exchange:

> We are aiming at increased mobility, in order to tackle the xenophobia and nationalism which is present, it exists … to bring children [from across the Balkans] to Serbia and enable them to see that they can feel comfortable here, to take Serbian children across the Balkans … and through this to foster intercultural learning. (I1.1)

Moreover, the same respondent suggests that the above initiative has been challenged by the burden of the legacy of conflict by those who experienced it directly:

> This [reconciliation] is something that is slowly building up. Those children are post-war generations but they're influenced by the attitudes of their families and immediate environment towards these issues. So, in the beginning, it was difficult because parents were reluctant to allow children from Bosnia to go to Serbia, but once the children came and were warmly accepted then all the prejudices were broken down […] they [the children] hang out together, they remained in contact… then children from Serbia went there [to Bosnia] … and this is what the positive thing is. Sometimes children are accommodated by host families and this is something that breaks barriers, certainly breaks barriers […] This is friendship! And when children from Bosnia came here, this was great, they became close friends … and this was very positive here in the post-conflict countries. (I1.1)

Similarly, a review of the official project documents reveals that while socialising with peers from neighbouring countries and learning about other cultures, as well as peaceful coexistence and exchange, are amongst the key individual benefits arising from involvement in this sort of initiative, in the long term, community benefits may yet be engendered in the form of increased interethnic tolerance and cooperation if the sustainability of the project is secured (Stajić, 2012; Van de Velde, 2006). Hence, as argued by Schulenkorf and Sugden, inter-community development through sport should be understood as an on-going process in which active participation and cooperation between all involved are preconditions for creating positive social experiences and lasting social outcomes (2011: 237).

Moreover, in the case of Serbia, reconciliation processes through sport are concerned with establishing networks between Serbian and Albanian populations both in Serbia and in Kosovo. Still, considering the delicate political situation concerning the status of Kosovo and the official Serbian stance in the new political status negotiations regarding the position of Northern Kosovo's majority-Serbian municipalities, as well as the relatively recent conflict (e.g. Lehne, 2012; Tansey, 2011; Woehrel, 2013), some research participants from the Northern Kosovo province tasked with the implementation of grassroots football initiatives in this area, stated that it was still too

early to work on breaking inter-ethnic divides (I1.10). On the other hand, however, an informant involved in the implementation of the OFFS argues the opposite:

> I wanted to start the project in Kosovo to make some initial connection between Serbs and Albanians there … we made five [football] schools, two were Serbian and three Albanian and at first we had Serbian [football] schools in the Serbian part of Kosovo, Kosovska Mitrovica, and Albanian [football schools] in Albanian parts … but then we made multi-ethnic schools [of football] in the Serbian territory in Kosovo Polje where children from Peć [and] Priština took part and it was mixed … it worked great, no differences among the children. I'm saying you couldn't see that the children were divided along national lines, coaches as well. (I1.13)

Hence, the points of contacts among Serbian and Albanian stakeholders through these events, although short-term and small scale, are considered important initial steps in reopening communication channels and making steps in rebuilding cooperation and trust within these communities, because as stated by the same respondent, who coordinates multiple GFP activities in the south of Serbia:

> Before we initiated this event in Kosovo it was impossible to imagine the interaction between these children […] but I have made friends with Albanians through this project as well and we are in contact even today. And, you know, those Albanians are reluctant towards the idea of mixing their children with our children in the teams we made during these events, but when I call them … I have so many [Albanian] friends and there are no problems at all. They are really fair and when they promise to do something they do it. (I1.13)

Supplementing this, an interviewee involved in OFFS delivery in Serbia attests that, although positive social interactions between children from various ethnic and national backgrounds in this initiative are instigated during the five-day events, the sustainability of these social encounters is questionable as it is contingent on their age and mobility prospects as those involved are aged between seven and eleven (I1.9). Perhaps even more importantly for extended bottom-up cultural change are, however, the lived experiences of inter-ethnic cooperation and sustainable networking of those directly involved in the work with children on the pitch through engagement in this project because, as suggested by Gasser and Levinsen, the creation of an apolitical and cohesive forum depends on the coaches abilities, motivation (2004) and cultural values. In that regard the same interviewee states:

> The kids are too young to commute. But the important thing is that the coaches cooperate. Seminars [for coaches] were for a long time international. For example we have a seminar in Daruvar in Croatia and people from Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and trainers from Denmark all go there. […] This is a three-day seminar and there is enough time to make friends and … this is the point. I made friends … I was on my way through Macedonia and my car broke. I called a man, a coordinator [of the OFFS] in Macedonia and he organised everything and my car was fixed in 25 minutes. So this is the key. I made friends in Kosovo, in every single town there, Peć, Priština … they were Albanians. Not to mention Bosnia and Croatia because there I have a lot of friends. I have recently visited my friend in Priština […] so this is … this is worth a fortune to me. (I1.9)

The above testimony has been confirmed by group interview participants concerned with managing the OFFS nationally:

> Our coaches, people from the sport were the first to get together again after all these sad war years, through our project at its beginning … and that made our project especially important. They made friends through our project and they're still friends today. These are the people that meet through our seminars, they're hanging out together, making a sort of international cooperation, organising tournaments and using us as a base for coordination. (GI1.1.2)

Thus, a prerequisite for inter-community development is the active engagement of project staff to instil and provide a new value system for the participants on the pitch, which is conductive to multiple social developments. In addition, the activities that relate to the building through sport of children's understanding of the meaning of racism, nationalism and discrimination require further engagement off the pitch as the children involved in these initiatives lack insight into these issues:

> I was doing a survey with the children last year, including questions about racism, nationalism and discrimination, about the meanings of the terms and how they could be suppressed and the result was … this was not clear enough to them. So we need to organise separate workshops to work with them on these issues. (I1.1)

Thus, the extension of educational and social foci beyond the work on the pitch was suggested. Moreover, a somewhat similar suggestion was found in the OFFS's official project evaluation documents. Namely, the evaluators observed that if increased inter-cultural development is to be achieved through this initiative the commitment to the strategic promotion of cross-border cooperation and connections should be bolstered for further long-standing results to be achieved (Udsholt and Nicolajsen, 2011). Moreover, as the evaluators argue, although the events are a gathering site for children of diverse ethnic, national and social backgrounds that directly fosters their interaction on the pitch, the engagement in the involvement of local communities is focused more on activities related to the sport, whereas conflict resolution has not received adequate attention (ibid.). Likewise, a review of the project's documentation reveals that the instruction manual for project implementers concerns methodological approaches in sport pedagogy, while issues of inter-ethnic cooperation through sport have not been addressed sufficiently (OFFS, 2010). Still, officials from the OFFS suggested that an indirect conflict management approach is applied through the OFFS using the physical activities as a tool to encourage extended cooperation on the pitch.

Discussing the processes and results of the above initiatives, the majority of GFP officials stated that football has proven to be a positive developmental force if used as a

culturally changing tool at the grassroots level. Moreover, augmenting the number of participants from various backgrounds involved in these events bolsters the capacity of grassroots football initiatives to impact upon increased processes of inter-cultural and inter-ethnic exchange. As respondents' testimonies indicate, however, the extent to which positive social outcomes from the pitch are transferred into the wider local scope is not known precisely. This issue has also been highlighted in official evaluations of these initiatives (Stajić, 2012; Udsholt and Nicolajsen, 2011; Van de Velde, 2006), while the recent release of the *Community Change Track Manual* for OFFS instructors (CCPA/Krueger, 2013) informs the shift into strategically oriented project impact assessment.

Clearly, while the broader community benefits to arise from the sport-for-development initiatives are contingent on cooperation between the stakeholders involved in a given project, coordinated action between those operating in the same sport-for-development field in the same territory and within the same GFP umbrella, can foster and expand the local community impacts of the programme. As was noted in Chapter 6, the cooperation modalities between the partnership projects are underdeveloped, thus restricting prospects for increased and sustainable impacts from the programme. Moreover, as stated by the relevant interviewees (GI1.1; I1.9; I1.13; I1.1), joint activities in mutual reconciliation efforts with non-sport actors such as NGOs or governmental institutions in the Balkans, have not been developed to foster broader social impact. On the other hand, increased networking with local community stakeholders, such as local authorities, sport clubs and local sport governing bodies, including the parents of participating children, promises augmented social benefits for the relevant communities (I1.1; I1.9; I1.13; GI1.1). This is most notably reflected in the 'twin city' approach of the OFFS, which ensures that bridges between the relevant event's stakeholders at events are established and that beneficiaries from diverse population groups and origins are encompassed (Udsholt and Nicolajsen, 2011).

In summary, as was indicated earlier in this thesis (see Chapter 3) and confirmed in the present section, in order to be effective, sport-for-development and peace programmes should rely on durable collaborative strategies between multiple actors pursuing developmental agendas reflected in the development of networks of trustful and reciprocal relations if they are to affect long-term community change in the form of community cohesion. Ultimately, however, although the portrayal of predominantly bonding social capital generated in these initiatives at the level of participants can be

conductive to increased social cohesion during an event—which in the short-term can suppress individual diversities, based on matching sporting identities—the increased sustainability of bridging relations and community benefits is achieved through the mutual encounters and exchanges of those concerned with direct work with children and, thus, their ability to assist event participants in processes of increased long-term community cohesion. Yet, as we have seen in Chapter 6, the circulation of particularised trust in the above relations suggests that even formal bridges when practiced occasionally are infused with dense relational principles. Although, this may generally challenge the spread of wider socially cohesive processes in relation to reconciliation and inter-cultural exchange, as has already been argued, it has the potential to trigger long-term processes while achieving short-term community or inter-community cohesion (Coalter, 2013).

7.3.3 Images of Social Inclusion and Social Integration in Rugby League in Serbia

Unlike the GFP, inclusionary and integrative processes in rugby league are rarely strategically programmed and are subject to specific contextual and situational settings. Moreover, the developmental momentum of rugby league in Serbia (see Chapters 5 and 6) indirectly fosters the inclusion and integration of marginalised groups of the population into this sport. This corresponds with what Coalter calls the 'sport plus' orientation in development of sporting and wider communities where increased participation and access to sport are the principal goals of development (2007, 2010). So far, the thesis has already addressed issues of inclusion and integration in and through rugby league on the basis of displayed levels of masculinity, attitudes towards the involvement of women and the gay population in this sport, including the 'tolerance' of diverse ethnic and social backgrounds widely present in this sporting context. Still, the layers of inclusive and integrative practices can be further deconstructed if we are to inspect how ethnic minorities and those marginalised on the basis of poverty and social background fit into the context of rugby league in Serbia, in order to draw links between these processes, the nature of social capital and consequences for social cohesion.

The inability to access social networks due to economic deprivation is a form of social exclusion (Kelly, 2011). In the context of rugby league, access to networks is available to those marginalised on poverty grounds by the application of flexible membership fee policies. Thus, while some clubs grant open access to all who are willing to participate

in this sport without introducing compulsory fees, others that have introduced a standard membership fee policy have, in most cases, flexible fee regimes for those who are unable to afford membership costs. An interview respondent who runs a club in northern Serbia refers to this situation as follows: 'Well, our local community is not that poor, but there are some people who occasionally come to me and say 'Hey listen I don't have a job at the moment so …' and I say 'Okay you know that the membership fee has never been a condition for you or anyone else to remain in the club'' (I2.14). Likewise, a coach of the junior team of a club from Belgrade states:

> I have a bunch of kids who are not charged for the fees because they don't have [the money], I know that they don't have [it] […] Even if they're not talented enough I look to work for the sake of the sport, not even for the sake of these kids, because I think that all players should be given a chance and those not talented [enough] may become good players after a while. (I2.17)

The above testimonies confirm, once again, that commitment to sport development by widening the participation base or, at least, avoiding its decrease fosters the removal of economic barriers for inclusion into the sport. Still, in order to secure the minimal economic sustainability of the clubs and, thus, their development, certain rugby league clubs apply a less flexible membership fee regime. As testimonies reveal, however, the fees are customised with a view to the broader context and are believed to be affordable for the majority of those involved in this sport: 'In our club everyone should be charged fees. There are a couple of fee levels. For juniors it is 6,000 dinars per year, which is 500 dinars per month[21], for seniors it is 3,000 dinars per year and this is 200 dinars per month' (I2.9). Clearly, while the reported fee regime represents a symbolic contribution to sport development, and as such should not widely affect processes of inclusion, it still sanctions those living below the poverty line in Serbia by preventing their involvement.

On the other hand, as has been widely reported, the majority of clubs across Serbia grant unpaid, open access to all those interested in joining the rugby league community. In some instances, voluntary financial contributions by members (and non-members) are encouraged so as to contribute to sport development. This instance paves the way to an increased pool of participation and multiple community developments. In this vein, one of the group interview participants comments as follows:

> Players don't pay membership fees. They did before. It is two years now since we decided to stop this system of membership fees. We understand that the situation is terribly difficult and it is simply impossible to know what is around the corner and we need to try to build a system which is sustainable, but the sustainability of the system is not dependent on membership fees […] So everybody is welcome here. (GI2.2.2)

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[21] Less than 5 EUR or 4 GBP.

Or, as another interviewee from a southern Serbian club indicates: 'Our club is open to all. Anybody can come and train in this sport as we don't charge membership fees' (I2.4).

Moreover, research participant I2.16 stresses that he has never paid membership fees, implying developed generalised reciprocity in this sport, by indicating that:

> When needed, we contribute with some money, those who are able to of course. Here in rugby league it is not like in other sports where clubs are being founded to earn some money … we love this sport and we are finding ways to broaden it and to attract more people, so I don't see the point in charging membership fees, unless it is necessary to help, to support the club, only when needed.

The notion of widespread support practices in this sport clearly bolster the 'openness' of the rugby league community. However, while open access may include individuals in sport, a more pro-active approach involving outreach work in the local community may further affect socially inclusive processes by providing direct access to information and networks to those who lack the ability to engage in the sport. Hence, interacting with local schools to promote the sport and its accessibility for boys of various social and economic backgrounds has the potential to increase inclusion and foster sport development. Research participants often repeated that interacting with local schools has contributed to vivid processes of inclusion (I2.1; I2.2; I2.4; I2.7; GI2.2; I2.9; I2.11; I2.14; I2.15; I2.17). One of the respondents indicated that rugby league is in fact strategically oriented to the promotion of the sport in local schools in order to improve inclusive process in line with the national sport development strategy: 'We go to schools in order to foster participation in sport and we know that we support the national policy on sport, which says that sport contributes to social inclusion' (I2.9). Still, although the outreach work represents active engagement in the field of inclusionary endeavours, it is not concerned with the programmed targeting of marginalised groups. On the other hand, although the emerging status of rugby league in the Serbian sport system constrains such strategically targeted engagements, it indirectly influences the social inclusion agenda.

Furthermore, socially integrative practices in and through this sport are apparent in the situationally and contextually driven integration of ethnic minorities, amongst whom the Roma population is the most significant. Briefly, the Roma population is one of the largest ethnic minorities in Serbia and continuously suffers from various levels of social, cultural, and economic marginalisation (Brkić and Djurić, 2005). While there is no exact data on the population size, some estimate that there are approximately

300,000 Roma residing in Serbia (ibid.). Moreover, the marginalisation of this ethnic group is, in the context of Serbia, connected to widespread stereotyping of Roma as culturally inferior and is linked, on the other hand, with the relative passivity of the Roma population in terms of its involvement in mainstream society. Therefore, the integration of the Roma community remains an issue that, in the context of Serbia, requires the coordinated action of multiple parties in this process—the state, local communities, and the Roma population (Brkić and Djurić, 2005).

In this context, sport has a role to play. Interview data shows that, albeit sporadic, the involvement of Roma is commonplace for the majority of rugby league clubs, while the club from the town of Leskovac in southern Serbia has contributed the most to the inclusion of Roma in this sport. When discussing the involvement of Roma in this particular rugby league club, one respondent indicated that the integration of this population into the sport is subject to the specific local context and setting: 'There is a lot of poverty there in Leskovac, you need to go there to understand what I'm talking about. The football pitch [used for rugby training] is close to the Roma settlement … and they saw rugby [being played] and were invited to join' (I2.2). Similarly, another research participant involved in the work of the Leskovac club explains: 'We are the only club that greatly involves the Roma, there is not a single problem with this. For example, one day two Roma kids came and watched the training and asked to join in and, of course, they later joined [the club]' (I2.4).

Still, while the removal of barriers to participation in sport for those marginalised on ethnic (and poverty) grounds fosters bridging between diversities in this sporting setting, it is only the first indispensable step in dynamic processes of integration. In this vein, although the majority of accounts report that discrimination towards ethnic minorities is not prevalent in this sport, which is strongly committed to nurturing collectivity (I2.1; I2.2; I2.3; I2.4; I2.5; I2.6; I2.7; I2.9; I2.10; I2.12; I2.13; I2.14; I2.15; I2.16; I2.17; I2.18; I2.20), closer analysis of informants' accounts yields evidence of the existence of hidden discrimination practices, reflected in the use of language and cultural discrimination. Likewise, the dominant discourse when addressing Roma involvement in this sport by interviewees was along 'us and them' lines.

> You know they [Roma] joined this Evangelist church and they were there each Sunday. They were given food, clothes, shoes maybe some money but whole families would come to the church and then they were unable to come to Sunday training […]. You know, Saturdays are great they all come, but on Sundays they are in church and the sport is losing out. (I2.2)

Moreover, in addition to different cultural practices, the deprived social position of the Roma population is deemed to constrain integrational processes:

> We had problems to integrate them with … with how to say this, we are all Serbs, but with white Serbs. And during that period no one had stolen anything. You know, Roma they are really, I mean, there are different stories about them and okay maybe there are some who steal, but thank God nobody has never stolen anything here […]. The only problem is that they are a bit … I don't mean to say … but they are lagging behind, and their community made them underdeveloped and they can't get the basic things, they can't understand. I invest twice as much time with them compared to other children. (I2.4)

This narrative suggests that although initial bridging across cultural and social divides to achieve increased degrees of integration through participation in sport is an indispensable factor in integration, it does not exclude discrimination within the 'integration space', which is reflected in a lack of trust in the ability of 'others' to comply with the dominant cultural and social systems of values. Therefore, although bridging creates possibilities for integration, it does not necessarily exclude discriminatory practices.

In support of the above narrative, research participant I2.9 stressed that the involvement of Roma in this sport is not without problems, indicating the still weak integration within the entire rugby league organisation:

> There is a problem with the Roma there because … now there has been a problem, just now, they couldn't come [to participate in a junior camp], five, six players, because they needed to work on the fields. They are from senior, junior and cadet categories … but even when they come to the camp they are afraid of other children from Belgrade, they are tense … And we have told children from Belgrade: 'I don't want to hear of any incident, if I do, you'll be suspended'. And they [the children from Belgrade] accept them, but they [the Roma children] are tense all the time. They come to the coach and say 'mister, mister', they can't relax for a single moment. And they are always in fear of something and they often ask the coach whether someone is going to beat them or to bully them … and they are very difficult to integrate, you know.

Not surprisingly, the route from stepping into integrational processes to 'embeddedness' into a particular social structure is challenged by the social and cultural meanings ascribed to particular population cohorts, both on the part of mainstream society and the marginalised population itself. Moreover, issues presented in the above narrative may be the result of the practiced language discrimination that Roma players face on and off the pitch. Still, this issue was not directly commented on by interview participants. It was rather hinted at in the subtext, stressing their ethnic distinctiveness but also their superior physical abilities as racial or ethnic traits:

> You will never hear that some kid says 'look, this Gypsy is this or that' something abusive … but you will hear 'oh look, that Gypsy how he passed me, how he was fast'

or 'damn, this Gypsy doesn't cut his nails, he scratched me' or these sorts of things, but there is no 'those Gypsies are this or that', you know. (I2.2)

Yet, evidence from the field visit to observe a junior tournament in the town of Leskovac in January 2013, has informed the researcher about the type of language discrimination some of the junior rugby league players from Belgrade-based clubs use: 'The players from Belgrade often use ethnically derogatory curses to express dissatisfaction with the way Roma players play or call them rednecks or peasants, which demonstrates racial/ethnic distinctiveness in this context' (Field notes, 11 January 2013).

On the other hand, however, stereotyping Roma players' physical abilities as superior has been widely represented in the interviewee accounts. This corresponds with the notion of generalisations used to define and judge all individuals who are classified in a particular racial or ethnic group (Coakley and Pike, 2009: 319). The majority of interviewees have insisted that Roma players have distinctive physical characteristics, which makes rugby league suitable for them and which simultaneously represents one of the key premises for their acceptance within this sporting community. The premise being the affirmation of a sporting identity, hence bridges across the traits of cultural and social groups (Long et al., 1997). Yet, it is indispensable to note that this may represent covert discrimination as the above inclusion still separates Roma and other players from one another along 'us' and 'them' lines. In this vein, respondent I2.4 highlights:

> The most interesting thing is that they [Roma players] are physically superior. They are by far the most physically able compared to all the other kids I have had the chance to see play, they are the most able [...]. And they are the most talented. I mean they really are, incredibly physically able. But the problem is that they can't remain in the sport long as they marry early and then they need to work and simply they get drawn away from the team and from the game.

Moreover, others who have pointed to the physical abilities of the Roma involved in rugby league have stated that the community applauds their distinctive sporting abilities by positively associating them with black players from leading rugby league communities worldwide:

> There is no discrimination, or at least I have never seen it. The thing that is like a reoccurring gag is calling them 'our Māori', which is not bad at all because they are really technically superior compared to their peers. This is in a way a compliment in terms of rugby league terminology. If someone calls you Māori, Fijian, or Kiwi, or the like, it is not abusive. (I2.11)

Although this comment positively refers to physical distinctiveness, it confirms that inequalities are actually subject to bridging social capital, which may contribute to the expansion of this sport. Thus, while tolerance is immanent to bridging social capital, it may still reproduce inequalities and discrimination within the networks of aforementioned relations, confronting the often-heralded democratic traits ascribed to this type of social capital (e.g. Putnam, 2000).

On the other hand, evidence on these practices of mutual support developed through rugby league (see Chapter 6), are widely present in the domain of Roma integration in this sport. This drives 'tolerance' to 'care' in the domain of integrative processes in this context: 'We give them all the equipment, they can't … but also we are trying hard to involve local government in supporting them' (I2.3). Or as research participant I2.4 indicates: 'The most important thing is that whenever we can give them something, we offer them, give them ... Whenever we have some stuff, the senior players bring some stuff and … So, of course, whatever and whenever we could help, we did help'.

Once again, while norms of generalised reciprocity exercised in this context are, as shown, the central element in the social capital that dictates the dynamic nature and volume of this very concept, they are also the factor that informs dynamic socially integrative processes, contributing to increased cohesion in particular social domains. Thus, sport is more than a mere reflection of racial and ethnic relations in the society, it is also the site where ethnic (and racial) relations occur and change (Coakley and Pike, 2009).

Finally, the myriad of ethnic backgrounds of those involved in rugby league, as previously shown, indicates that spontaneous integration is one of the sports developmental principles. On the other hand, although small-scale, negative reflections of social stereotyping of certain ethnic groups involved in this sport was reported in two instances during the research interviews. In this vein, the sporadic expression of verbal ethnic discrimination towards representatives of the Jewish community active in this sport has been reported by respondents of both Serbian and Jewish background: 'Well, I witnessed ethnic discrimination towards one of the officials on the part of one player—he hates Jews … idiot' (I2.5). Interestingly, however, the same rugby league official the latter informant pointed to has reported another case of ethnic discrimination, which according to him, instigated ethnically motivated verbal discrimination:

> I have faced discrimination […]. It was verbal discrimination, verbal, and that guy instigated hate speech on the basis of a slightly different ethnic background and the like, which sort of caused one of the ugliest incidents in recent rugby league history here […] and that was a considerable blot, so this cast a shadow on all these positive things. But it can be said that this was pretty much an isolated case so far. (I2.11)

In contrast, another representative of the Jewish ethnic community involved in rugby league disagrees with the above statement indicating that verbal disputes have not been rooted in ethnic discrimination but in the personal antagonisms of the protagonists (I2.1). Yet, although not prominent in the narratives of the majority of the research respondents, reported incidents of ethnic discrimination should not be overlooked as they suggest that cohesion is not a category that presumes the uniformity but instead the variability of the prevailing processes—i.e. social inclusion, social integration and the related social capital model that informs social cohesion. Additionally, interviewees from various minority ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Jewish, Hungarian, Romanian) strongly asserted that rugby league is an inclusive sport project that does not impose discriminatory practices towards those from ethnically, socially and culturally different backgrounds.

In summing up this picture of social inclusion and social integration in rugby league in Serbia, it is indicative that support for sport development at multiple levels of the rugby league community bolsters socially inclusive and socially integrative processes by means of creating stocks of increasingly bridging social capital that act as the central developmental resource for the sport (see Chapter 6). Correspondingly, the created image of social inclusiveness and integration is an indirect product of commitment to widening the participation base, so as to select among those who can support rugby league's developmental mission. An indirect product of the development of this sport is, therefore, a greater level of cohesiveness embedded in the matching developmental aims. Still, as was shown earlier, the lines on this image are not straightforward. The creation of relational bridges for the development of the sport, is not liberated from the discriminatory practices that resonate with the social stereotyping of those who are subjects of integration. In this vein, it could be argued that the integration of those marginalised on various bases was not purely and inherently a positive social process, as it might reproduce covert (and overt) divides that exist beneath its framework. On the other hand, however, although appraisal of the physical abilities of those involved in this sport underlines distinctiveness and may reproduce inequalities with consequences for integrative processes, it equally impacts upon the creation of distinctive sporting identities that may act as suppressors of cultural and social divides (Long et al., 1997)

and, thus, make a positive case for the multiple community benefits in the particular social context.

7.4 Social Context as a Determinant of Social Capital and Community Benefit in and through Established and Emerging Sports in Serbia: Why Does Social Context Matter?

The shape, the structure and the associated forms of social capital generated in a social field, including the resulting processes that affect community change, have not evolved in a vacuum (Schulenkorf and Sugden, 2011). So far, and in many instances, the discussion throughout this thesis has suggested how the wider social context is pertinent to the generation, maintenance and reproduction of social capital and the associated socially cohesive processes in and through established and emerging sports in Serbia (see Chapter, 6 and Sections 7.2 and 7.3). We have seen how the political culture of networking, especially when exercised at the local community level, the generally unfavourable economic context and disorientation in identifying with 'new' and 'old' social and cultural values resonate with particular types of cultural and structural social capital elements and, therefore, with forms of social capital, trends in active civic participation in and through sport, and the resulting community benefits. The aim of this section is, however, to add a few more facts to the relevance of context in social capital research in this cultural field and, thus, to round off the discussion on the nexus between the wider, macro social context and mechanisms of social capital creation in the meso and micro contexts of the researched sports, including repercussions for community empowerment from these interrelations.

Viewed comprehensively, the particular social context is deemed to be a defining factor of sport development processes in Serbia, including the ways social capital, as a resource for sport and community enhancement, is generated and maintained. The accounts of all research respondents in this study confirmed the wider, context-dependent nature of these processes. Thus, this section jointly discusses additional evidence of the complex, context-dependent nature of social capital and the resulting outcomes in and through established and emerging sports in Serbia.

Firstly, the principles of the culture of political networking have been deemed to be transferred horizontally and vertically, nationally and locally throughout the web of public positions that ruling political parties are in charge of. As has been already

indicated, this applies to the domain of amateur sport development, which is subject to local and/or national government support. Although this issue has been repeatedly underlined during interviews in both case studies, rugby league research respondents have been more consistent in stressing how political networking and the convertibility of political and economic power (Pešić, 2012) constrains multiple communities' development opportunities. As research participants argue, this is done through the exercising of different scales of corruption, clientelism and conflict of interests that affect wider, socially regressive development and maintains the society in a transitional vacuum. The often-heard argument during interviews was that the development of sport is strongly bound with political networking:

> You can't do anything in this country if you don't have connections … it is necessary to know people and, unfortunately, one must push oneself everywhere … and it's even better if one is politically active, which, I mean … this is not right. This is not okay. (I2.4)

Moreover, in displaying the ways politics in local governance corrupts social networking and the associated development of sport, interviewee I2.9 states that non-transparent fund allocation practices exercised by local self-government officials, including political party officials, is a result of interest-led political networking in the domain of the abovementioned social (and political) arenas. He further asserts that central to interest-led political networking, which often converts political power to economic power, is a different level of corruption that assists in the development of informal, non-regulatory exchanges of power between the entities involved:

> I was told that the club would get funds from the local self-government … but I was so disappointed and so angry ... I will fight with all available means against it. I was told that 'Okay, your club will get the money and you will need to give back 20 percent from the given amount'. I don't want to give anything to anyone! I don't want to get into this! […] And believe me I asked myself then if it was like this at the micro level, what was going on when they built a highway?! You know what I mean? This illustrates the situation in this country and these are the things sport is faced with […] Moreover, the biggest sponsors of sport are public enterprises and what does that mean? Giving and taking money for the political party dominant in the public enterprise and they all are doing it the same way, ruling and opposition parties, while, on the other hand, they speak of totally different things in public. And then you get shocked when this is at the micro level as well, but you can't … And that's why this reflects the general social picture … and we're trying to fight this but it is very difficult, very difficult. (I2.9)

The tone of the above narrative, which captures the dominant processes at stake in linking with different levels of public office, was repeated in many instances in both of the case studies investigated. Correspondingly, research respondent I1.15, active in the delivery of the GFP, states that misuse of the LSGs funds for local sport development is widely practiced by local public officials, supported by the inability of the formal

system to combat non-transparent, corrupt, and clientelistic local governance practices. In addition to the latter argument, interviewees I1.4 and I1.7, both holding high-ranking positions within the FAS's Grassroots Football Department, assert that while political, interest-led networking resonates with the lack of control of financial flows and wide-spread corruption within the system of sport, it equally prevents the implementation of a regulatory policy framework, which directly impedes good governance principles in the domain of sport: 'I think that there is not enough political will and readiness to do it right, simply there are no people who wish to deal with it seriously' (I1.7). Clearly, and in line with earlier discussions, linking social capital is overwhelmed by interest-led political and economic networking, which is characterised by a paucity of trust, while norms of reciprocity feature particularisation in gaining access to particular resources for individual and/or group advancement. Thus, as argued by Cvetičanin and his colleagues, such context-specific linking social capital represents political social capital available to members of politically forged networks (2012), which *inter alia* corresponds to negative social capital as defined by some social capital scholars (Long, 2008; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Putnam, 2000). On the other hand, however, and in contrast to what Numerato and Baglioni argue (2012), evidence from this research suggests that political networking in the field of sport, might not necessarily be in conflict with sport developmental objectives. On the contrary, it seems that it may pave the way to meeting particular sport developmental goals in conjunction with meeting other non-sport group or individual interests. In that regard, a few interviewee accounts, particularly from the emerging sport case study, have indicated that the involvement of politicians in rugby league structures might be beneficial to the advancement of the position of this sport in the Serbian sport system:

> I think that it is a logical step that someone who is politically active or someone who is in business takes part in the SRLF Board. There is now some kid in the Board that is politically active, but hey … he's not politically networked, he's so young, he doesn't have the right quality to push things further on some higher level […] It is not that easy to find those people, but we need a couple of them from politics or business. (GI2.2.2)

This narrative confirms (once again) the relevance of political networking for the development of sport in the Serbian context. It also suggests that, while access to economic resources is best acquired if politics is involved, the recognition of the sport within the sporting and wider communities may be enhanced through a web of political connections or, in other words, increased linking social capital. In a similar vein, respondent I2.13, involved in the establishment of the Student League within rugby

league, believes that political networking, imposed by informal systems of power in the Serbian context, needs to be incorporated in the sport development agenda:

> On our Board [of the SRLF], we have a guy who is politically active, because we thought that we could make something out of this. Our key target were people from [political] parties in order to try to do something […] Maybe it is not right to say political networking, but it is … you know, we were active in establishing links with the Ministry [of Youth and Sport] during the previous government, because we knew a guy who worked there … In this way we improved the status of the Student League. All those [who are] politically active and involved in our sport were once rugby players. But this was not a kind of political networking … we didn't go that far because we knew that if they discovered us that we'd flounder, so we were just exposing ourselves to get attention so that they could see that we were doing good things.

As suggested, therefore, the modes of linking social capital confirmed once again its bonding character in the domain of formal (and informal) provision of institutional support for sport in Serbia. Thus, sport cannot be exempt from political power relations (Coakley and Pike, 2009) that are grounded in dense, particularly reciprocal, relations in the context of Serbian sport.

On the other hand, however, although interviewees from the GFP case study have suggested that the political context shapes vertical links in the field of sport, they were more prone to highlighting the ways in which the economic context in Serbia affects processes of sport development, including social capital mechanisms and the associated socially beneficial outcomes. Most of these processes—captured in the nexus between economic deprivation, social capital and community benefits in and through sport— have been discussed throughout this study. This is notably reflected in the trends of active civic participation in sport, which are largely dependent on pressures of 'time and money'. This includes the prioritisation of individual over collective interests, as a result of unfavourable individual economic positions in this context (see Section 7.2), as well as issues of exclusion/inclusion in and through sport that are conceptually linked with economic deprivation trends (see Section 7.3). Yet, the narratives of the research respondents, including the analysed media reports, have revealed an additional de-cohesive factor that resonates with the wider economic setting and the position of established sport in the social space in Serbia, namely that of parental pressure on children to be involved in grassroots football initiatives and to achieve outstanding sporting results. Basically, treating children as 'business', as Blagojević-Hughson indicates (personal communication, April 2013), with a view to future financial gain from involvement in sport, is a direct consequence of the present economic and value system contexts immanent to the Serbian social space (I1.3; I1.6; I1.7; I1.8; I1.11; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15; GI1.1.1; GI1.1.2; GI1.1.3; I4.3; I4.2; I4.4; I2.9). Clearly, while the

emergence of these practices shapes the ways networking, trust and norms of reciprocity are forged between adults (parents and coaches) in established sport, it also partly affects how children maintain social relations with their peers in the team. Moreover, in the Serbian context, as is the case with less developed societies elsewhere, involvement in football at an early age promises to bear financial fruits in the near future (I1.8; I1.11; I1.13; I1.14; I1.15; I4.3; I4.2; I4.4). In this vein, research participant I1.11 indicates the following:

> I think that in this country which became warped, deformed, I think that children are becoming victims of the sick ambitions of their parents and when I observe some situations in my local community, the way coaches behave, the way parents behave … they see in their son [a new] Bane Ivanović … and they see 30 million Euros and how they approach the coach to explain that their son is Bane Ivanović or Kolarov and that … they [parents] don't care about the child's happiness and satisfaction … and in this way they push those children down the wrong path … and this is the way parents behave, they tell their children how to play during the match … because … they have a vision for the children, they envision their child should be a Champion's League player.

> **I1.13:** There is a great danger from parents because they see money in their children, easy and quick money to be earned. When their child starts to play football, they see their 100 or 200 thousand Euros in transfer [fees].

Correspondingly, in confirming the above narrative, interviewee I1.7 asserts that 'it is impossible to isolate children from the negative examples, the bad examples [of their parents]', that strive to promote the instilment of de-cohesive practices embedded in the ultimate promotion of individual over collective benefits. Moreover, this suggests that prioritising individual advancement in the domain of amateur team sports paradoxically transforms participation in team sports into sites deficient in stocks of social capital, or where developed trust and norms of reciprocity are mostly particularised in nature (see Chapter 6).

In addition, narratives from the GFP interviews correspond with concerns of informants active in different aspects of sport development and/or research in Serbia. They have asserted that the unfavourable economic context in Serbia has infected amateur and children's sport (particularly grassroots football) with the extensive promotion of negative values on the part of parents, through acts of treating children in sport as an instrument for economic prosperity:

> There is a negative effect arising from poverty. Parents have started to treat their children, especially in football and basketball, like slaves. So, considering how clubs operate, parents get encouraged to do so and in that way they do a disservice to their children […]. And those parents fight at the matches and there you have parents who are hoping for quick money, and there you have parents who fight [and] who argue with referees. (I4.3)

Or, as informant I4.2, long involved in sport journalism, argues:

> Here in our country nobody regards football as joyful for children, but they think of money instead … and then you witness all this misbehaviour such as cursing, fighting […] because parents are under pressure, they know Novak [Djoković] earned money and Ana [Ivanović] and Jelena [Janković], so my kid must be successful too, this is the only chance to get out of this [situation], they think. And in Serbia, you know how much values are deformed. The only purpose of sport, at the moment in Serbia, from the perspective of someone whose child is getting into sport, is money. Nobody thinks about other benefits, about health and physical development.

Although the above evidence portrays a nexus between the economic context and the development of children's sport in a considerably harsh manner, it should not be overlooked because it confirms the precedent narratives from the neutral position of an observer who is concerned with the comprehensive analysis of both positive and negative developments in Serbian sport.

In further discussing the issue of the nexus between the economic context and manifestations of impediments imposed by adults in the field of sport, the established sport case study research participant I1.14 extends discussion by pointing to the role of coaches in these phenomena:

> Parents … this is a catastrophe. I was overseeing a tournament recently and they almost started to fight. This is a real catastrophe … will his kid play [or] won't his kid play … Moreover, those football schools [involved in tournaments some GFP initiatives organise] everyone there thinks: 'Okay this parent has enough money and he'll give something to the coach'… because these coaches are forced … and the coaches are not paid and this is a problem as well, but I don't look for excuses for them … I would never have done that, this is so unjust to other kids. So everyone comments on issues of the pressure of parents and how they impact badly on the children—they should withdraw … but there are parents … sometimes they fight at matches […] I had a pupil who was talented but his father ruined him, [he] was moving him from club to club … and I feel sorry for those children, somehow parents ruin those kids … Parents yell and shout 'run, kick the ball, not there, pass the ball…'. Bad manners. And this badly affects children. And those coaches that use strong language and yell and shout at children.

> **GI1.1.3:** You know, the approach to children is gladiator-like. This is drilling of children. Because, this is a question of, you know … kids are thrown in to competition at the age of five or six and there they play under the pressure of those coaches and parents who terribly negatively affect the development of a child.

Clearly, the social and economic environment the sports are embedded in defines the structure and culture of a multitude of social relations between sport providers and sport participants. Once again, approaching sport participation with a view to financial gain prioritises economic over social prosperity or polarised over collective benefits. Likewise, as revealed, the above issues distort the ethical principles of sport, including positive experiences that children and youth generate through sport, particularly in the domains of social development and social capital building (I1.2; I1.4; I1.5; I1.8; I1.6;

I1.7; I1.11; I1.14; I1.15; I2.3; I2.7; I2.9; I4.3; I4.2; I4.4). Thus, as Bronfenbrenner suggests (1999), cited in Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005), positive sporting experiences are linked with the types of reciprocal social relations with others—parents, coaches and peers—and, hence, positive inter-group relations, and cooperation (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005).

Still, the role parents and coaches play in these specific contextual constellations is, as explained above, linked with the particular cultural and social values developed in and through sport in the Serbian context. This is especially related to acts of violence and aggression exercised in sport by parents and coaches that hinder bottom-up instilment of positive sporting culture while supporting the transfer of negative value systems into the domain of social relations developed in amateur children's football and rugby league (I1.4; I1.6; I1.7; I1.8: I1.11; I1.13; I1.14; GI1.1; I2.7; GI2.2; I2.9). Moreover, research respondent I2.9 indicates that negative social developments in amateur sports are a consequence of the social climate as a whole, not only of the individual acts of certain parents or coaches, which, as he further argues, can only be challenged on a limited scale by the efforts of clubs to change the dominant value systems. In confirmation of these views, a number of media reports indicate an escalating problem with verbal and physical violence between adults at grassroots football matches in Serbia, in reaction to which neither the football organisation nor the relevant state bodies have developed adequate preventive or suppressive measures (e.g. Nikolić, 2012; Radisavljević, 2012; Vlajić, 2012)

Finally, as a number of research results show, negative adult influences cannot be isolated. They infuse young people's and children's cultural value patterns that go on to prioritise the culture of violence as a relational principle, the culture of 'gain without pain', that subverts, for instance, values of education, discipline and cooperation (I1.11; I1.8; I1.7; GI1.1; I2.7; I2.9; I2.14; I2.15; I2.18). A research participant from the GFP case study explains this in the following manner:

> I see that the negative values have become the primary ones. Even at an early age children are convinced that many things they do will not pay off in the future. I am engaged in this initiative [the GFP] and I work in a school and I know by heart how they act and think, they think: 'Why should I go to school and become a geography teacher when I can't get enough money from that, no, I won't do that, I want to be someone who has a BMW and a thick, golden necklace and for that I don't need school'.

This and other narratives presented in this section advocate that, in some respects, reflections of praising 'instant gain' distort the system of positive social norms such as

personal and social empowerment through enduring efforts in sport and education. In addition, research participants I2.7 and I2.9 agree that young people's negative attitudes, mostly expressed through violent encounters with peers (and towards rugby league officials) at matches and training, are a consequence of the transfer of macro social approval of violent relational practices in and around sport.

Thus, abiding to the rules of a particular culture of values instilled through wider political, social, economic and cultural landscapes at all levels of involvement in the researched team sports, proves to be unfavourable for the generation of social capital, effective social inclusion, social integration, active civic participation and, finally, community benefits in the form of increased social cohesion. This is not, however, to suggest that the sport initiatives researched are restricted to challenging wider contextual regressions, but that counterbalancing macro-level social practices, values and norms is limited to the domain of sequenced initiatives in these particular instances as well as their ability to extensively promote positive social practices in and through sport. Thus, as reported elsewhere in this thesis, these instances are reflected in the potential of the grassroots football scheme to project positive youth experiences through enhancing the multitude of social interactions, promoting joy and fun for the children involved, avoiding the pressure of results, and providing increased access to the sport. On the other hand, however, they also reflect the potential of rugby league to instil a culture of mutual support, extensive cooperation and active civic engagement in and through sport.

7.5 Summary

This chapter extended the discussion in the field of sport and social capital by investigating the nexus between socially cohesive processes that communities may benefit from and the nature of social capital in the investigated Serbian sports. It has sought, therefore, to analyse platforms for active civic participation, social inclusion and social integration promoted in and through amateur sports, with a view to the social, political, economic and cultural contexts socially cohesive processes depend upon.

Previous research in the area, conducted in the context of developed countries, has demonstrated that active civic participation in the form of sport volunteerism collaborates with the ways stocks of bridging social capital are produced and maintained, contributing to processes of social cohesion, citizenship and civic identity

(e.g. Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Putnam, 2000; Seippel, 2006, 2008, 2010). Yet, in contribution to the above debate, evidence from this study suggests that, within the sporting context embedded in the wider semi-peripheral Serbian social landscape, sport volunteerism is developed in line with the nature of social capital, which does not necessarily exhibit bridging social capital traits. Hence, the nature of social capital, as discussed in Chapter 6, assigns particular characteristics to trends, forms and factors that delineate volunteer engagement with implications for social cohesion in the multiple communities that were researched. Moreover, the association between these relations and their implications for social cohesion in both case studies is manifested through the examination of mostly steady, long-term volunteering—i.e. the form that has the potential to more reliably appraise processes of active civic involvement (Cuskelly, 2008) in both sports. Furthermore, as the research findings show, trends in the volunteering practices of both case studies are tense, with a fluctuating yet declining nature. The line of tension in these trends is defined by the pulling power norms of reciprocity and trust exhibit in these processes. Whilst the decrease in trends of volunteerism is contingent on levels of trust developed across the organisational structures of the researched sports, as well as the ability to network extensively with the wider community (including macro contextual, and instrumentally-led motives for engagement) the developed norms of reciprocity, accompanied by a pool of extrinsic motives to volunteer have the ability to counterbalance the decline by mitigating potential shortfalls or by keeping trends in volunteerism static. Although these findings confirm the previously developed debate on direct links between trends in volunteerism and generalised trust (e.g. Putnam, 2000; Seippel, 2006; Tonts, 2005), they do demonstrate that *positive* trends in volunteerism in the researched sports are dependent on the degree generalised (and particularised) norms of reciprocity, as the cultural element of social capital, are applied. In addition, immanent to trends in volunteerism and associated norms of reciprocity is the *emerging* or *established* position of sports in the meso-sporting context. These positions are, as was shown, inversely proportional to trends in norms of reciprocity, social capital and active civic engagement in these sports with direct, proportional ramifications for social cohesion.

Thus, although the GFP promotes long-term volunteer engagement in the delivery of the programme's activities, which may be associated with an extension of bridging social capital (Seippel, 2006, 2008), the unstable, fragmented and declining nature of volunteerism in this programme corresponds with traits of a social capital model (see

Chapter 6) that encapsulates the main postulates of bonding social capital. In this respect, volunteerism, as an indicator of social cohesion, has a limited capacity to instil sustainable multiple community cohesion. Still, this is not to suggest that social cohesion is not achievable in these constellations, it certainly is, but in a sequenced, fragmented manner within the particularly dense networks in which efforts at collaboration for mutual aims are to be achieved. This conforms to arguments outlined by Cuskelly (2008), Coalter (2007) and Nichols et al. (2012), for example, who have highlighted the positive link between bonding social capital and volunteering in sport.

In contrast, although rugby league faces multiple contextual constraints in increasing volunteerism, the extensive support practices that resonate with developed norms of generalised reciprocity, maintain the pace of voluntary engagement both in and through sport in the community and, in so doing, extend the radius of social cohesion to the wider 'other'. Again, resonance between the nature of volunteerism and the nature of social capital is confirmed to be of a harmonious nature. Likewise, the wider social role of rugby league in Serbia is permeated by extended, contextually and situationally bound, volunteer engagement in the local community, which is, *inter alia*, rooted in established practices to generally reciprocate and in a created sense of local belonging. Although small-scale, as demonstrated, such activism adds to processes of social cohesion through bridging between wider local and sport communities with a view to mutual development.

Furthermore, the sense of belonging to the sporting community and identification with the *ethos* of rugby league directly impacts on bonding practices through the reproduction of the masculine identities that underpin the ways volunteer engagement is sustained and how inclusion/exclusion is exercised within the realm of this sport. Having established this aspect of social capital and its associated outcomes, this study contributes to the still underdeveloped debate on the nexus between gender regimes and social capital and the production of associated outcomes in sport (e.g. Cuskelly; 2008; Spaaij, 2011; 2012). Yet although, exercising strong masculine identities within the wider 'crisis of masculinity' in the Serbian context (Hughson, 2013a; Blagojević, 2009a) may potentially restrict inner social cohesion, relative to the degree of displayed masculinity against the backdrop of this sport, the emergence of processes of transformative, inclusive masculinities (Anderson and McGuire, 2010) instigated by, amongst other things, bridging externally with partners concerned with positive young men development, opens up space for extended social cohesion in and through rugby

league. Thus, the nature of and flux in masculinity may add to understanding of the dynamic processes of social capital and the associated outcomes produced in and through this sport.

Moreover, the nature of inter-relational strategies resonates with the ways social inclusion and social integration contribute to community benefits. As evidence from this study suggests, even when strategically programmed, as in the case of the GFP, the objectives to integrate, tolerate and reconcile in and through sport, so as to increase prospects for sport and community development, may be pursued through the genesis of dense, identity-forged social capital. In this way, the initial, weak ties established to sustain the involvement of those deprived on grounds of poverty, gender, and ethnicity, show tendencies of transformation into dense social relations revolving around common sporting identities. On the other hand, however, the issue of the sustainability of inclusive and integrative processes in the GFP is undermined by organisational bonding social capital and, thus, the lack of comprehensive collaborative mechanisms applied to increase prospects for wider, long-term community benefits. There is sufficient evidence to argue, however, that although limited, bonding social capital has the capacity to contribute to a socially integrative agenda, as an essential first step towards the generation of collective confidence, cohesion and cooperation (Coalter, 2007, 2010).

In contrast, the non-programmed, situationally and contextually specific, inclusive and integrative processes apparent in rugby league reflect commitment to increasing the participation base of this sport, through the furthering of bridging social engineering. However, although bridging social capital is considered to be more important for social leverage (Spaaij, 2011), it is not liberated from social divisions, including discriminatory practices, with regard to particular ethnic minorities included in this sport—a fact that can negatively affect prospects for increased social cohesion around rugby league. Hence, in agreement with Spaaij (2011), the attributes of inherently positive nature of bridging social capital and its role in socially cohesive processes should be challenged.

Lastly, the view of the macro social context has focal, explanatory capacity in enhancing the understanding of social capital creation and its manifestation in and through the researched sports. Thus, while confirming the multi-layered context-dependency of sport social capital (e.g. Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Sharpe, 2006; Spaaij, 2011), this study suggests that in the case of a 'transitional' society residing at the

European semi-periphery, overwhelmed by prolonged reform processes that invoke a de-developmental macro contextual status, a macro context comprising political networking, economic deprivation and confusion between 'new' and 'old' social and cultural values (e.g. Gordi 2001; Gordy 2005; Lazić and Pešić, 2013) is one of the key defining aspects of social engineering surrounding the researched sports. In completing the discussion about sport, social capital, and associated outcomes in the context of Serbia, the following chapter will work towards the analysis of the social capital sport policy context and its ramifications for positive futures for Serbian sports.

CHAPTER 8. The Sport Policy Context: Locating Social Capital in Serbian Sport Policy

8.1 Introduction

Drawing on the conceptual framework for this exploratory study, the present chapter concludes the empirical discussion of this thesis by assessing the nexus between the sport public policy discourse, the concept of social capital and socially cohesive processes in the institutional context of Serbian sport, and hence the role of the state in social capital production and maintenance. The chapter begins with an overview of the Serbian sport policy framework, including the policy-making process. This then leads into the central discussion, on the representation of social capital in national sport policies, including how the European Union pro-social sport policy objectives are transferred into the national sport policy portfolio in view of Serbia's current position in the European Union accession and negotiation processes. Finally, the chapter ends by debating the ways in which established and emerging sports facilitate implementation of particular sport-related social capital policy objectives, in order to demonstrate the implications of the sport policy context for both the researched sports and related community development. This chapter will thus contribute to the establishment of a base from which social capital related sport policy recommendations will emerge in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

8.2 The Serbian Sport Policy Framework: A Brief Overview

Drawing on discussion about the organisation and funding principles of the Serbian sport system in Chapter 3, the current section seeks to explore the policy framework for sport in the macro and meso governmental setting from which, the discussion on social capital policy perspective will follow. In defining the angle from which the policy framework will be inspected, however, understanding the notion and scope of 'policy' in a particular political and social context should be made clear. While there is no consensus in the academic literature, including political praxis, about the definition and the scope of the term 'policy' (e.g. Green, 2003; Hill, 1997; Houlihan, 2008; Lazarević et al., 2013), some authors advocate that the concept of policy should be understood as the interrelated decisions and courses of actions in the selection and pursuit of particular goals within the particular political context of a range of political actors or their

representatives (Green, 2003; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Houlihan, 2008; Jenkins, 1997; Page 2006). Moreover, as Page suggests, the term policy may refer to a 'constructed unity imposed on diverse and disparate measures', thus we may look at the totality of measures that affect sport and refer to the sport policy of a particular country or, as he further suggests, the term policy may often refer to a particular law or measure—including instruments of 'soft law' (2006: 208). Likewise, as Page indicates, policy may be embedded both in 'intentions' or policy principles that include a number of policy lines including 'actions' that refer to enacted measures and practices (Page, 2006: 208-9).

In the context of Serbian public policy, however, policies are perceived as 'strategies and operational methods made by the state and its bodies with the aim of maintaining and developing particular spheres of public interest and significance' (Stojiljković, 2012: 13). In this sense, the country's policy context, which is broadly regulated by constitutional provisions (Narodna skupština Republike Srbije, 2006) and operationalised through particular laws such as the *Law on Government* (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2012c) and the *Law on Public Administration* (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2010b), comprises development strategies, draft laws, laws, by-laws and related measures (Lazarević et al., 2013). In this view, the bulk of policies refers to a legislative framework that a particular line ministry within the government is responsible for, including non-legally binding policy documents such as, for example, development strategies that assess the needs and measures necessary for reform and development in a particular field (ibid.).

Within the field of sport, as has been discussed previously (see Chapter 3), the Ministry of Youth and Sport, as the central governmental body within the system of sport organisation, is responsible for the following:

> Public administration in the domain of: the system, the development of sport and physical culture in the Republic of Serbia; implementation of the national sport policy and national strategy for sport development; administrative and professional supervision in the field of sport; implementation and monitoring of developmental action plans and programmes in the field of sport in the Republic of Serbia; participation in the construction, equipping and maintaining of sport infrastructure of interest for the Republic of Serbia; international cooperation in the field of sport; setting the ground for access and realisation of projects in the field funded through the EU pre-accession funds, donations and relevant international development funds; maintaining the conditions for increasing citizens' access to sport, and other activities as defined by the Law. (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2014)

Hence, the establishment, facilitation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national policy framework for sport is under the jurisdiction of this Ministry, acting as the central governmental body for sport development. Accordingly, within the provincial and local context, sport policies fall under the thematic ambit of the enacted national sport policy framework, for which local authorities are responsible. Therefore, the scope of examination of social capital policy elements within this chapter encompasses national level sport policies. An overview of the Serbian national sport policy framework is provided in Table 5.

Table 5. National Sport Policy Framework

National Sport Policy Framework		
Development Strategies	**Laws**	**Bylaws/Rules of Procedure**
National Sport Development Strategy 2009-2013 National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence and Misbehaviour at Sport Events 2013-2018	Law on Sport Law on the Prevention of Violence and Misbehaviour at Sporting Events Law on the Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sporting Events and in particular at Football Matches Law on the Prevention of Doping in Sports Law on the Ratification of the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport Law on the Ratification of the Council of Europe Anti-doping Convention Law on Public Skiing Courses	Rules about the Harmonization of National Anti-Doping Policy with Revised World Anti-Doping Code Rules of Procedure on Doping Control Before, During and After Competitions Rules of Procedure on Personal Accountability in Breaching Anti-doping Rules Rules of Procedure for Exemption from the Anti-Doping Rules for Therapeutic Purposes Rules of Procedure on the List of Forbidden Doping Substances Rules of Procedure on the List of Forbidden Doping Substances for Horses Bylaw on Requirements for Engagement in Sports Activities and Business Bylaw on the Register of Educational and Other Organisations Dealing with Education in the Field of Sport Bylaw on the Work Permit for Sport Professionals Bylaw on the Uses of Public Sport Facilities and Practicing Sport in Public Sport Facilities Bylaw on the Form and Ways of Issuing Licenses to Sport Inspectors Bylaw on National Sport Associations Working in the Public Interest of Sport in the Republic of Serbia Bylaw on National Categorisation of Sports

		Bylaw on National Categorisation of Sport Professionals
		Bylaw on National Categorisation of Elite Athletes
		Bylaw on the Supervision of Specialist Work in the Field of Sport
		Bylaw on the Nomenclature of Sport Occupations
		Bylaw on the Funding of Programmes that Contribute to the Realisation of the Public Interest in the Field of Sport
		Bylaw on the Registration of Sport Organisations, Associations, Sport Societies and Unions
		Bylaw on the Content and Ways of Managing the Register of Sports Associations, Societies, and Unions
		Bylaw on Sport Branches in the Republic of Serbia
		Bylaw on Sport Branches of Special Interest for the Republic of Serbia
		Bylaw on Criteria and Requirements for Granting Scholarships to Elite Amateur Athletes and Pecuniary Aid to Elite Amateur Athletes

Source: Antidoping agencija Republike Srbije [Serbian Anti-doping Agency] (2014) (http://www.adas.org.rs/informacije/dokumenti-preuzimanje/), Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije [Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia] (2014) (http://www.mos.gov.rs/dokumenta/sport/), Šuput (2009).

In addition to a national sport policy framework, sport in Serbia is regulated by the international sport policy documents of the UN, the CoE, the EU and the policies of relevant international sport organisations. Table 6 summarises the key international policy documents accountable for development of national sport.

Table 6. Relevant International Sport Policy Framework

Relevant International Sport Policy Framework		
UN	**CoE**	**EU**
International Convention on Physical Education and Sport, UN General Assembly Resolution 58/5	Additional Protocol on Anti-Doping Convention European Sport for All Charter European Sport for All	The Treaty of Nice The Treaty of Amsterdam The Treaty of Lisbon

	Charter – People with Disability European Sport for All Charter – Elderly People Manifest – Youth and Sport The Code of Sports Ethics Resolution 3/81 on Women and Sport	

Source: Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije [Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia] (2014) (http://www.mos.gov.rs/dokumenta/sport/)

This is, therefore, indicative of the fact that the national policy discourse relies on key international and EU documents defining, amongst other things, the social role of sport. While the sport policy agenda accounts for, *inter alia*, Article 165 of the *Lisbon Treaty* (European Union, 2007) it omits to 'officially' recognise the relevance of the European Commission's *White Paper on Sport* and the accompanying *Action Plan* (EC, 2007a, 2007b), which represent one of the EU's key 'soft-law' policy directions in the field of sport and on which Article 165 of the Treaty of Lisbon is based (EC, 2007a). Yet, as argued by one of the Ministry of Youth and Sport officials interviewed: 'Although the White Paper on Sport is not a legally binding document, we [the Ministry] have addressed [through national policy] almost all the provisions of that document' (I3.2). The following sections of this chapter will disentangle this issue in more detail.

8.2.1 The Sport Policy Process in Serbia

It was noted previously that the Ministry of Youth and Sport is responsible for defining the national sport development agenda. However, there is limited evidence, in the Serbian context, on the processes according to which policies are developed at the ministerial level, including the process of sport policy development at the MYS. However, although policy process is defined through a regulatory legal framework, embedded in several legal acts[22], that comprehensively delineates the roles of public administration and government, Lazarević and her colleagues indicate that the policy-making system in Serbia routinely adheres to procedures for drafting and deciding on the legislative framework, including development strategies in the particular field (2013). On the other hand, as this group of authors argue, policy analysis, including

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[22] The Law on Public Administration (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2010b), Articles 12, 13, 20, 21, 61, 63, 65, 77; The Government Rules of Procedure (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013a) Articles 38, 39, 39a, 40, 41; the Law on Government (Vlada Repubike Srbije, 2012c) Article 45.

evidence-based policy-making and the formulation process, is not explicitly treated, in spite of a set of legally binding provisions, such as regulatory assessment of policy impact, that prescribe compulsory analysis of policy initiatives (ibid.). Moreover, policy analysis is intended to be applied only to draft legal acts while the entire scope of other policy initiatives remains unregulated, with respect to evidencing the issue a policy intends to address (Lazarević et al., 2013). There is, however, a vague indication in several articles defining the policy process (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013a) of the need for 'explanation of all relevant matters' encompassed within development strategies proposed by line ministries for review by the government. Moreover, considering the position of the country in the process of the EU accession negotiations, each policy-making initiative regulated by the above legal acts should provide a statement of analysis of compliance with the relevant EU law or policy in a given area. Significantly, regulations on policy process provide for basic cross-sectoral cooperation within the governmental policy-making system, including processes of public consultation (or public hearings), which imply social capital mechanisms as a tool for policy formulation procedures. While building and maintenance of institutional bridging and linking social capital in networking with public stakeholders is mandatory in the processes of drafting legal acts, development strategies and other policy documents may not abide by the above rule (Lazarević et al., 2013). Moreover, one of the drawbacks for coherent policy-making by the government and line ministries relates to on-going reforms, aimed at setting up a system for macro-level government policy planning. Although the system of macro policy-making has recently been evolving, incorporating a general framework for macro planning within the Government's Annual Working Plan and, insignificantly, Mid-term Operational Plans by some ministries, including a Memorandum on the Budget of the Ministry of Finance, it still remains incoherent and unconsolidated (ibid., European Policy Centre, 2013), which is typical for many transitional institutional contexts. As a result, public administration authorities usually set policy priorities in line with their respective agendas, failing to comprehensively harmonise with and incorporate the government's macro policy objectives. In this context, as stipulated by Lazarević et al. (2013), line ministries enter into a furious competition to secure a place on the list of the government's policy priorities. Hence, among the key challenges for the regulation of the policy-making system and for policy implementation remain the sound exercising of the existing regulatory framework for policy-making, setting up methodological guidelines for policy process at all levels of the system, extended coordination and cooperation with multiple relevant stakeholders

and, finally, policy-making based on policy analysis that yields sound evidence and the rationale for policy implementation.

Considering the above context, *sport policy-making* in Serbia considerably fits the greater picture of policy process and practice. Although there have previously been legal acts regulating the sport system, contemporary sport policy development has—especially since the establishment of the Ministry of Youth and Sport in 2007 (see Chapter 3)—been faced with grand system transitions reflected in, *inter alia*, the field of policy-making and implementation. In this respect, interviewee I3.3, a high-ranking official in the MYS, commented on the policy-making process, its stages and also activities on the re-establishment of the entire system of sport:

> Serbia has never had a developed policy in the field of sport. This Strategy [National Sport Development Strategy 2009-2013] was the first of its kind and it is partly the result of my studies in the field because, up until then, the previous law on sport did not foresee, in Serbia, the definition of policies other than legal acts. Then the minister and I decided to go for a first ever Strategy for Sport Development and then within the Strategy we defined 22 strategic goals and started with its formulation. Prior to formulation we did a couple of studies because we didn't have any data on the sport system … and this was done in order to establish a baseline from which future research results could be measured […] and this system, as it functions now, was the result of our efforts in this field. So the plan was first to make the Strategy and then to draft the Law on Sport. The Law on Sport has waited 20 years to be adopted because different lobby groups and interest groups constrained the whole process from being completed. And the new Law [on Sport] contains almost 90 percent of the Strategy's objectives. Through that Law we established the system of sport.

Clearly, broader policy initiatives within the realm of sport policy-making are the result of less institutional, but rather individual visions of development and regulation of the sport system and the ways the policy process should be enacted, which is, amongst other things, a result of the incoherent, restorative national policy-making context. Nonetheless, in this context, evidence-based policy-making, supported by a limited number of policy analysis studies, is pursued with the aim of establishing the pillars necessary for development of the sport system through strategic policy priorities. In this regard, a regulatory impact assessment of the draft *Law on Sport,* followed by the Opinion of the Office for Regulatory Reform and Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Serbian Government was conducted, however, as stipulated by this Office in a limited policy research analysis manner (Kancelarija za regulatornu reformu i analizu efekata propisa, 2009).

Moreover, as interviewee I3.3 further explains, the entire sport policy-making process takes into account vast consultation and multi-stakeholder coordination endeavours. In

this way, the potential of social capital generated in policy-making networks as a tool for the pursuit of a set of policy objectives is recognised:

> After we finished our research and established working groups to deal separately with those 22 strategic aims [of the Strategy], we started a huge consultative process. We had a number of debates, around 40 people participated in working groups and sub-groups. These were academics, representatives of sport organisations, sport professionals, eminent sport professionals and this, amongst other things, led to full acceptance of the Strategy and this was the reason for its good implementation; it lives its life because the sport movement made it, the professionals, not politics. (I3.3)

On the other hand, however, a couple of instances confirm that cross-sectoral consultation between certain ministries that have a secondary interest in the area, is insufficiently developed (I3.3; I3.2; I4.3) or even non-existent. As one of the interview respondents, who took part in the policy-making process as an independent sport professional, argues: 'Cooperation, for instance, between the MYS, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry responsible for social politics in this process is totally underdeveloped' (I4.3). In a similar vein, interviewee I1.8, one of the FAS's GFP Network coordinators, states that multi-level cooperation and exchange is significantly lacking on overlapping policy initiatives in the domain of social development, including sport and education. Accordingly, the potential of social capital as a policy process resource or as a tool for policy operationalisation on the horizontal, cross-sectoral level has also not been adequately recognised in this process.

Critically, however, while confirming the mass policy-making consultation process in the field of sport and an analytical approach to policy issues, research participant I4.3 adds that the final phases of the policy formulation process have been shaken by indecisiveness in certain policy objectives and priorities:

> I was engaged to lead one of the sub-working groups, to write one part of the Strategy […] and I remember how it was technically done. It started very ambitiously and there were about 12 or 13 thematic sub-groups of two, three or four people. And then something really huge was prepared and some very good analysis was done and the like … And afterwards everything was compiled into one huge document, but after it was randomly shortened—a little bit from here, a little bit from there—to have all and to have nothing. And then it reached the point where, for instance, some policy objectives stated in the introductory part of the Strategy were totally omitted in the remaining parts of the Strategy. This is due to that kind of working practice, perhaps not only because of this, but also maybe because of the desire for political point-scoring, to develop the Strategy before some other institutions.

Evidently, although the framework for the sport policy-making process may in this context be examined through the rational, stages model (Bramham, 2008; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Houlihan, 2005), in practice 'policies slip the grasp of policy makers' (Bramham, 2008: 11) to involve a plethora of institutional, political and particular group

interests. In this vein, as Bramham further suggests 'success and failure in policy terms may have little to do with rational decision making to solve long-term problems but rather more to do with short-term gain to appease interested parties, to secure re-election and to maintain control over the policy process' (2008: 12). It is important, therefore, to comprehensively appreciate the environment in which sport policies are developed and implemented so as to embark on a salient analysis of the policy process from the perspective of a particular analytical framework (Houlihan, 2005). Yet, while the aims of this study are not set to develop a sport policy analytical framework, a brief overview of the policy-making environment may contribute to comprehensive understanding of the sport policy context and the ways in which social capital operates as a tool in this environment. Nonetheless, in order to complement insights into this context, a research participant engaged in the work of the MYS pointed to the issue of a different scale of interest involved in the process of policy-making:

> The greatest barriers [to policy-making] were interests. The interests of the actors in this unsettled [sport] system, because the system wasn't established … we were changing the state through this transition […] and in this confusion people wanted to get their share and we had different models there […] Also, a huge barrier in this process were some interests that constrained the endorsement of the Law on Sport due to the issue of the 'privatisation' that this law regulated … and we had, in the media, a huge campaign [claiming] that the law wasn't good. But once the Law was adopted nobody talked about privatisation as an issue anymore … anyway nothing was done in that field even after its endorsement. So obviously there were some interests that constrained the adoption of this [Law]. (I3.3)

This was confirmed by respondent I1.7 who states the following: 'I think that the interests of some individuals and some clubs have been crucial in deciding on the content of the Law [on Sport] […] and I also think that there is no political will to deal with it [policy-making] seriously'. Thus, inspected through the perspective of the social capital concept, social capital generated in and around particular interest groups may act as a resource protecting or promoting the aims of networks directly or indirectly involved in the processes of policy-making. There is, indicatively, a direct link between stocks of social capital developed in the domain of a particular 'policy interest' and the power of structural interest groups to bring their agendas to the policy-making table.

Finally, in complementing the discussion on policy process in the field of sport, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation become the focus. However, limited evidence in this respect constrains sound analysis. Nonetheless, some evidence from the interviews indicates that, for example, certain provisions of the *Law on Sport* in the domain of the 'privatisation' in sport have not to date been implemented (e.g. I4.3; I4.5; I4.2; I3.3; I3.2; I1.7; I1.8; I2.9; I2.7; I2.3), while there is no analytical data on other

aspects of implementation, including evaluation of the implementation of the *Law on Sport* and relevant bylaws. On the other hand, however, analysis of the implementation results of the *National Sport Development Strategy 2009-2013* including the Strategy's *Action Plan* has been performed in coordination between the MYS and the Republic Institute of Sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2012b). The analysis aimed to assess the state of implementation of the Strategy's objectives, to evaluate outcomes and indicate issues in this process with a view to narrowing the policy framework for the following policy-making cycle. Although there is no explicit information on the methodology used to assess and evaluate policy implementation there are indications that reports from the institutional agents in the sport system on the implementation of the Strategy's objectives have been used as an analytical baseline. Additionally, policy evaluation research was conducted in a limited manner in terms of, for instance, development of recreational sport (I3.3). Therefore, according to the available data, salient evaluation of policy implementation, as an indicator of the performance of government policies and as a contributor to continued evidence-based policy development, is not solidly built into the system of sport policy-making in Serbia. Amongst other things, this is a result of infant, underdeveloped policy tradition in this field including a vast number of factors that, in an unstable, transitional policy-making context, affect these processes.

To sum up, the sport policy context in Serbia is characterised by an increased momentum in system restoration. In this respect, the baseline for the comprehensive national sport policy framework is designed with the aim of regulating and bringing to attention pressing issues in the national system of sport. However, in this context, the process of policy-making, including monitoring and evaluation of policy initiatives, remains unsettled. Moreover, and of particular interest for this study, policy networking on cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial levels focused upon mutual policy objectives as a part of the policy cycle, including an evidence-based approach to policy creation, reside at the periphery of the sport policy process. This indicates that the developmental potential of social capital created within a given policy network to foster sport policy-making and implementation endeavours goes unrecognised. On the other hand, however, increased networking around (private) groups interests that have certain policy preferences, including networking between policy-makers and various interest groups, suggests that exercising reciprocal relations facilitates processes of the advancement of certain policy interests within the sport policy agenda. This fact once more upholds the

dominant political culture of networking embedded in the creation of 'political social capital' as explained by Cvetičanin (2012) characterised by particularised cultural social capital elements in the context of policy operations that underpins and prolongs endemic distrust in public institutions in Serbia (Gordy, 2004).

8.3 The Conceptualisation of Social Capital in Serbian Sport Policy and Social Capital Policy Transfer

Central to the forthcoming discussion is how, and to what extent, are social capital and the related concepts of active civic participation, social inclusion, and social integration treated as policy goals in national sport policy and to what extent does this respond to the key societal sport policy objectives of the EU, conceptualised through the EC's *White Paper on Sport* and related policy documents. In general terms, it could be argued that Serbian sport policy is grounded in three objectives: 1) development of grassroots sport (for children and youth); 2) enhancing sport infrastructure and, 3) development of elite sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). In addition, of particular importance for strategic policy orientation, are pressing issues that correspond to the fight against violence in sport. The overwhelming majority of state sport funding is, however, targeted toward elite sport interests and enhancing sport infrastructure (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2013a), while actual support for the development of grassroots sport remains on the outskirts of funding priorities. In spite of the above policy focus, the elements of social capital and related terms appear throughout sport policy goals. In this respect, as the key sport policy document that for the first time in the Serbian sport development history systematically delineated national sport policy objectives, the NSDS 2009-2013 was taken as the baseline document for interrogating social capital policy elements. On the other hand, however, this is not to indicate that other policy documents have not been treated in the same fashion, but that the main policy ideas and following objectives that are transferred from this strategic document to laws, bylaws and related action plans are inspected through the framework of the NSDS's objectives.

The NSDS begins by setting up the rationale for establishing strategic aims in the field of sport, indicating that fostering national cohesion, development of democratic values, human rights and freedoms through sport have a central role in preserving and protecting the social role of sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008: 6). In the same fashion, the initial premise in justification of the rational for

enacting the *National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence and Misbehaviour at Sport Events 2013-2018* (hereafter as NSPVMSE) is that 'Sport is [a] universal medium in [the] creation and achievement of values that change societies, develop national cohesion, foster democracy, human rights and freedoms' (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Furthermore, the above rationales are incorporated into the main strategic principles of the NSDS, which suggest the importance of 'the promotion of tolerance and equality of all citizens through sport', while gender, religion, nationality, race, disability and any other individual characteristics and differences should not prevent people from participating in sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). In this policy segment, of particular interest is the notion of national cohesion and the role of sport in fostering this concept. The explicit treatment of this category for preserving sport's social role is, however, not particularly furthered in the later segments of the inspected policy documents. As a consequence, it is not clear how national cohesion, democratic values and sport are interrelated and understood within the realm of the inspected policy documents—whether national cohesion equates to social cohesion as a measure of *civic* solidarity and cooperation or if it equates to *ethnic* cohesion as a marker of solidarity and cooperation based on the notion of national identity (Berg and Hjerm, 2010) and how sport is expected to contribute to the above processes.

However, the main strategic aims of the NSDS that herald the social role of sport demonstrate rather partial recognition of social capital and the related terms of social inclusion and integration in sport, active civic participation, prevention of violence in and around sport, including their relevance for sport development, which simultaneously and in broader terms refers back to the link between sport and national and/or social cohesion and the promotion of democratic values. Yet, it should be noted that the argumentation with respect to the concept of social capital and related terms for advancing the social role of sport within the inspected policies is largely limited to the *in* sport sphere, while treatment of social capital as a developmental community resource that can be generated *through* sport was used in a timid fashion. In addition, it is indispensable to note that there is no explicit reference to social capital within the national sport policy framework.

Nonetheless, within the realm of the 22 strategic aims of the NSDS, three goals directly refer to the social inclusion and social integration of deprived social groups and volunteering in sport, while one goal sets out to address the development of grassroots

sport for children of all population categories through increased participation in sport through the school system. Moreover, although not explicitly indicated within the policy's strategic aims, prevention of violence in and around sport is covered by the NSDS and its Action Plan (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2009), including a distinct policy document, the NSPVMSE. As has already been noted, the NSPVMSE comprehensively deals with violence in sport as a pressing issue of negative social capital creation in Serbia, which, if addressed properly, may result in increased social cohesion at multiple levels (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Lastly, the sport policy discourse is committed to enhancing cross-sectoral coordination and networking with the goal of better facilitating sport policy implementation in line with the overarching social reform processes in Serbia (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b).

In this way, the inclusion and integration of deprived population categories *in* sport is a matter of substantial concern for the Serbian sport policy agenda (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009, 2011a). This social segment of sport policy covers both the direct and indirect inclusion of persons with certain types of disability in sport (through the school system) and greater inclusion of women and girls in the sport system in Serbia, including increased participation of children in sport through the removal of structural and financial barriers for sport participation in general.

In this policy context, increased participation of persons with disabilities in sport is envisaged to be developed through a set of analyses, followed by policy recommendations in this segment of the sport system. Namely, although sport for persons with disabilities has long been developing within the Serbian sport system, the NSDS recognises that its governance at all levels is fairly unregulated, mostly due to underdeveloped partnerships, coordination and cooperation mechanisms between sport organisations in this field, including the poorly defined roles and authorities of national and local sport organisations for persons with disabilities, and a lack of sustainable exchange of information between these entities (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). This suggests, therefore, that in addition to a need to broaden the participation of disabled persons in sport, social capital is one of the focal developmental resources for this sport developmental segment. Moreover, creating the conditions for the external networking of these sport organisations with the pool of national sport associations, does reside in the sport policy aims in this field. Finally, the broader social role of sport and the place of social capital is, in this respect, secured

through policy determinations to foster processes of the social inclusion of children with disabilities into the schooling system through participation in sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2009) including initiatives that aim to inform the broader community about importance of the social inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). In this respect, albeit in a limited manner, the sport policy discourse is concerned with issues of increasing social cohesion in the community through establishing networking and exchange mechanisms between relevant stakeholders within the realm of the sport system, widening the participation base and understanding sport as a relevant tool in the promotion of the social inclusion of this population category.

Furthermore, removing barriers to the bolstering of gender equality in sport by widening women's participation base in sport, but also through empowering women to take on a greater role in sport governance issues, is what the NSDS and accompanying Action Plan are aimed at. In particular, based on the limited research analysis and relevant assumptions about the under-represented position of women and girls in sport in Serbia, the policy discourse heralds its commitment to substantially invest in the development of women's sport by providing research on the current position of women in sport, increased financial support for development and the promotion of sport for women, analysis of the role of women in sport governance and the facilitation of international networking within the domain of comprehensive participation of women in sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). On that note, apart from the recognition of international networking as beneficial for the development of this sporting sphere, indirect resonance with the concept of social capital is highlighted through the NSDS's mention of current trends in the widening of women's participation in sport, which involve non-discriminated access to sport of 'women of all cultures, ages, nationalities, religions and classes' (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008: 17). In this way, the sport policy agenda mainstreams sport's social role, through the promotion of equal opportunities in sport, whereas social capital will be potentially acquired by means of greater inclusion of women in sport. Yet, the policy fails to conceptualise the potential of national and local networking that could result in the increased inclusion of women in sport.

Ultimately, one of the three central sport policy priorities is the development of youth sport and sport for children. In this domain, the policy discourse is mainly concerned with the development of school sport, including physical education and inclusive

participation in sport for all children and young people from diverse social, cultural, national and religious backgrounds (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). In justifying policy priorities in this area, the NSDS indicates that sport and physical education in schools is the right of every child, through which 'permanent individual and professional development is achieved, life lessons are learnt, ethical values are built as well as communication, cooperation, team work, respect for others, […] [and] mutual coexistence in peace and harmony are achieved' (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008: 9). Still, although the policy previews a set of measures to assist the development of youth sport and sport for children, it fails to acknowledge the ways the claimed social role of sport will be enhanced within this segment of the policy objectives, which may indicate the common acceptance of the policy makers to herald 'belief' in the beneficial role of sport, rather than evidence-based policy argumentation. Moreover, while the NSDS recognises the value of networking between the school sport system and sport associations and clubs in fostering the development of grassroots youth sports and sport for children so as to set the scene for future elite sport successes, the NSDS's Action Plan omits to define the particular steps to be taken in accomplishing the above objective (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). This may suggest a lack of clarity in policy objectives, including inconsistency throughout the policy-making process with respect to an interplay between social capital and the development of youth sports and sport for children. Lastly, although the NSDS claims that financial barriers preventing the increased participation of children (and the general population) in sport should be diminished, it fails to incorporate particular policy measures to assist in the social inclusion of children and young people deprived on the basis of poverty (ibid.).

Furthermore, one of the momentous policy tenets addressing negative social networking that results in the promotion of racism, nationalism, xenophobia, homophobia and related discriminatory practices is embedded in measures to combat violence in and around sport, which, if effectively applied, may assist in recovering socially cohesive processes in and through sport. In this context, policy objectives for the prevention and suppression of discriminatory practices resulting from disruptive social networking in and around sport are concerned with the effective mobilisation of inter-sectoral cooperation and coordination mechanisms at international, national and local levels, seeking to counterbalance socially de-cohesive processes (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije 2008, 2009, 2011a; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Hence,

engagement on the generation of the stocks of social capital to act as a tool in decompressing the negative social engineering, which is apparent in violence (and misbehaviour) in and around sport, acts as a central policy premise (ibid.). Although the NSDS and the *Law on Sport* consider violence in sport as a pressing issue to be resolved, among other ways, through multi-level coordinated action, the NSPVMSE foresees the detailed development of networking practices as a core policy tool (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). In this respect, the NSPVMSE attempts to introduce principles of multi-sectoral cooperation, which involve continuous exchanges of information, consultation and discussion on the prevention and suppression of violence in sport, and related misbehaviour around sport, that undermine positive social values. This additionally involves capacity building in the coordination of sport and non-sport civil society organisations, media, international, national and local state and sport governing bodies: 'Prevention of violence and misbehaviour at sporting events must be institutionalised, mutual and coordinated activity of state bodies, the sport associations and civil society' (ibid.). Moreover, as the NSPVMSE suggests, prevention of violence in the form of coordinated action will involve the instilment of a system of values that excludes violent conflict resolution and develops solidarity practices, tolerance and non-discrimination within the youth population of Serbia. In these processes, the Action Plan of the NSPVMSE delineates how parents and teachers should be involved in coordinated capacity building processes so as to advance positive value systems within the youth population (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Finally, the sport policy corpus recognises the benefits from networking, between (hooligan) supporter groups, sport organisations and the government at all levels, in preventing violence and its resultant outcomes in sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Still, while the state is engaged in the creation of social capital through the institutionalisation of cooperation between relevant stakeholders, it is unclear how it will affect social capital maintenance, in order to yield positive policy outcomes, beyond institutionalised, signed agreements on cooperation between interested parties. It is indicative, therefore, that the state's role in the creation of social capital is restricted to the enforcement of formal cooperational arrangements, while the effectiveness of the signed protocols is dependent on the capacities of the given sport or non-sport actors to exercise networking practices.

In further locating social capital as a policy goal within the realm of Serbian sport policy, it is indicative that the NSDS sets principles for the enhancement of *sport*

volunteerism by supporting networking initiatives in establishing a unique sport volunteer network at all levels of short-term volunteer engagement in sport, while equally indicating that sport development is subject to coordination and networking practices at multiple stages of sport delivery (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). In this context, promotion of the idea of volunteerism and civic values is foreseen to be achieved through the systematic inclusion of children, youth and the elderly to undertake volunteer activities in sport (ibid.). Engagement in this field is justified, on the one hand, by the unregulated volunteering system in sport, while, on the other, by the dominant lack of such forms of activism in sport in the country (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2012b). Yet, while the evidence from this research supports the NSDS's justification about the unregulated volunteering system in the domain of long-term volunteering, the latter assertion is slightly in collision with results of this study. Previously presented evidence suggests that despite decreasing trends in formal and informal long-term volunteering in sport in Serbia, this is still the dominant mode of civic engagement within the researched sport organisations (see Chapter 7), that in spite of the newly regulated volunteering system, through the enacted *Law on Volunteering* (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2010c), remains to operate along provisional principles exercised by relevant sport organisation(s). The NSDS's closing premise in this domain touches upon the instrumentally-led motives to volunteer, which, as the Strategy argues, should be fostered through setting up the principles of valorisation of volunteer work and the monetised contributions of volunteering to sport development, including the valorisation of volunteer capacities and experience (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2012b). It is fairly unclear, however, quite what mechanisms will be employed to enforce such a set of policy objectives. Overall, while the scope of policy objectives that address volunteerism in sport rightly concentrates on the regulation of the volunteering system, which undoubtedly is the first prerequisite for its further development, it still fails to comprehensively encapsulate the social benefits that can potentially be engendered *through* sport volunteerism. Thus, the instrumental use of volunteerism for sport development seems to be at the core of the policy priorities at this stage of sport policy and system development.

Finally, the sport policy discourse is committed to enhancing *cross-sectoral coordination and networking* with the goal of better facilitating sport policy implementation in line with the overarching social reform processes in Serbia

(Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). However, networking and cooperation in policy implementation, as the NSDS suggests, is not only bound with horizontal, cross-sectoral and cross ministerial cooperation, it equally concerns the enforcement of vertical networking and partnership development between government bodies at all levels, national and local sport organisations, non-sport NGOs and the wider community. It appears, thus, that coordinated action at all levels in policy implementation intends to comprehensively impact sport system restoration by filling the structural holes in networking, but at the same time to enhance control over the contributions of particular actors in the field of policy implementation and sport development in general. In this manner, the NSDS argues that for fruitful policy implementation the following is needed: 'Respect for the principle of transparency and the continuous exchange of information; involvement of all relevant parties and decision makers in all policy implementation and monitoring phases; continuous consultative process during the policy implementation phase' (ibid.). Thus, employing bridging and linking social capital as policy tools stands as a key principle in the operationalisation of sport policy. Still, as has been discussed in the previous section of this chapter (see Section 8.2.1), the extent to which generation of social capital as a resource for policy implementation has been practically achieved is rather paltry, meaning that the gulf between policy intentions and policy operationalisation is yet to be covered. The process of policy implementation, as the NSDS stipulates, should *inter alia* be 'efficiently integrated and linked with the entire social system reform in the Republic of Serbia and the key streams of the European integration process' (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008: 26), which amongst others includes sport 'policy transfer' initiatives that contribute to European integration processes. Comprehensively thus, as suggested by the NSDS central to sport policy implementation is multi-level (re)creation and maintenance of networks through which, engagement on sustainable cooperation and exchange should contribute to sport development in Serbia. The practice of applying the concept of social capital in policy implementation should, however, have greater systematic support (see Section 8.2.1).

In conceptualising rationales for policy decision-making in the domain of the social role of sport and more particularly the interplay between social capital and related concepts that correspond to bolstering social cohesion in and around sport, one may argue that international, but particularly EU, 'policy transfer' in the processes of macro policy harmonisation has gradually streamlined Serbian sport policy rationales. In this context,

policy transfer is understood as the process by which policy emulation is pursued, or institutional arrangements and policy ideas in one political system are used in development of policy platforms in another political system (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). That said, effective policy transfer which, resonates with the increased degree of the EU policy harmonisation process, may also correspond to qualification for EU pre-accession funds in the domain of social development (EC, 2014b). Support for this view may be found in national financial scheme allocations, that show high trends in elite sport and sport infrastructure funding while sport social development programmes received a minor share of funding from the sport budgetary agenda (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2013a, 2013b). Moreover, as the conceptualisation of the social role of sport, including social capital and related concepts of social cohesion, lack conceptual clarity and evidence-based links to the local context, EU policy transfer in this area appears to be a strong rationale for the advancement of sport's social role within the national sport policy discourse. Hence, in failing to account for the particularities of the local context with respect to, for instance, volunteerism and social inclusion in sport embedded in firm evidence, apart from the 'beliefs' and assumptions of relevant policy-makers, policies have only to rely on the 'central' policy agendas and sport policy principles relevant to the country's EU accession route.

8.3.1 Common Policy Grounds of the Social Role of Sport: The EU and Serbian Sport Policies

In justifying what appear to be sport policy rationales and in examining the extent to which Serbian sport policy is consistent with the EU sport policy platform in the realm of the social role of sport, it is indispensable to draw attention to the common aspects of Serbia's national sport policy and the EU's pivotal sport policy agenda—*White Paper on Sport* as the principal EU sport policy framework (EC, 2007a) and its accompanying documents (EC, 2007b, 2007c), including the recently developed *European Dimension in Sport* (EC, 2011b). It was noted earlier (see Chapter 3, Section 3.5.1) that, although often referred to as a 'soft law' (not legally binding for the Member States), the *White Paper on Sport* represents a landmark in assembling the sport policy objectives of the EU.

The momentous concern about the social value of sport in the EU's sport policy framework is based on the aspiration that sport has the ability to positively impact on

social development. An aspiration embedded in sport's harmonising, or cohesive social potential, 'which makes an important contribution to the European Union's strategic objectives of solidarity and prosperity' (EC, 2007a). In a similar manner, referring to sport's socially cohesive attributes, the *Commission Staff Working Document* accompanying the *White Paper* from the EU contextual perspective, states that sport has the ability to bring the citizens of the EU together, to reach out to everyone, regardless of age and social origin (EC, 2007c), while the *Commission's Communication on Developing the European Dimension in Sport* explicitly refers to sport's potential to contribute to social cohesion by breaking down various social barriers (EC, 2011b: 4). Thus, in examining the conformity of Serbian sport policies to EU sport policy initiatives, as recommended in the EU sport policy agenda, it is indicative that both rely on the assumption that sport is a contributor to a cohesive society, solidarity and democratic values of tolerance and equality of all citizens. However, while the EU sport policy insists on the promotion of *social* cohesion in and through sport, Serbian policy has a tendency to, as has been previously discussed, promote *national* cohesion and solidarity, which, if this equates to ethnically driven cohesion, refers to the processes of fostering 'national belonging' or national identity in and through sport. On the other hand, however, while it is not uncommon that states within or outside the EU often promote cohesion through sport as one of the social and political interests of the state, there is a growing trend in the promotion of civic cohesion or social cohesion through sport by the governments of the EU Members States.

Moreover, although explicit use of the concept of social capital is missing from the EU and Serbian national policy streams, they both reflect the concept through strategic policy aims that broadly address social inclusion and integration, active civic participation in the form of sport volunteerism, prevention of all forms of discrimination and, in the case of the EU policy framework, promotion of inter-cultural dialogue, development and peace (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Thus, it is clear that in conceptualising policy aims in the form of the social role of sport, both the national sport policy platform and the EU sport policy framework remarkably share common policy ground. However, from the perspective of content, while the EU sport policy platform and particular policy aims assign sport a wider social role embedded in its potential to affect large-scale community development through social capital creation, Serbia's national sport policies are mainly restricted to benefits of social

capital and the related concepts of development *in* sport, regardless of sport's wider social contribution in these endeavours (EC, 2007a, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). Perhaps the possible reasons for such incompliance between the two policy realms are as follows: 1) the need to first set up the ground for regulation of the national sport system, which has been negatively affected by overwhelming transitional drawbacks and to then concentrate on *in* sport pressing issues; and, 2) the inability to relate with a missing coherent macro policy framework and then encapsulate common policy grounds within multiple intersecting social and educational policy fields. Sport policy transfer in the domain of harmonisation with EU sport policies shows, therefore, discrepancies in content for the social role of sport, which, on the other hand, resonates with divergences between the national context and the degree of desired policy transfer. In particular, processes of EU policy transfer have contributed to framing the national sport policy agenda and its main strategic aims, which resonates with the transfer of objects such as ideology, ideas and terms, evident with regard to the use of social capital and related terms of social inclusion, social connectedness and community wellbeing (Hoye and Nicholson, 2009: 447) throughout national policy. Nonetheless, even in a setting such as this, policy convergences and divergences on the treatment of the social capital concept, and relevant social outcomes within EU and national sport policy platforms, can be drawn.

Social inclusion, social integration and the promotion of equal opportunities in and through sport, as has already been shown, feature in both policy streams. However, unlike EU sport policies in the domain of sport for people with disabilities, the NSDS is mainly concerned with internal system regulation and the need for capacity building of relevant stakeholders, which presumes multi-level networking with the entire sport organisation. In addition, widening participation in disability-specific sporting practices streamed at national policy level adopt a one-dimensional approach to inclusion of people with disabilities in sport, while a somewhat broader orientation in defining the objectives relevant to this field is reflected in the inclusion of children with disabilities, through participation in sport at the level of the school system. Yet, a line of divergence in policy approaches to this particular issue, within the inspected policies, can be found in the degree of social inclusion envisaged to be achieved through implementation of the policies' respective objectives. In this context, unlike the NSDS, EU sport policy approaches to social inclusion of people and children with disabilities, include the promotion of unabridged access to sport and participation in sporting activities on an

equal basis with others, through the creation of networks and cooperation strategies between representatives of regular and disability sport organisations (EC, 2007a, 2011c). In this vein, the EU justifies its position on the inclusive potential of sport in stating that 'sport [both competitive and recreational] is a cross-cutting tool for integration, job creation and equality for people with disabilities' (EC, 2007c: 18). Moreover, both policy platforms are strongly committed to gender mainstreaming in sport related issues that in general terms address common issues of widening the participation of women and girls in sport and increased inclusion of women in sport governance, including the development of multi-level networking to foster initiatives in this field of social inclusion. EU sport policy objectives, however, go a step further. In that regard, they explicitly draw attention to the significance of inclusion and empowerment of various deprived categories and vulnerable groups of women through sport (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). Furthermore, although covered in both policy streams, inclusive development of grassroots sport and promotion of physical activity by enhancing networking between the educational and sport sectors has gained greater currency in the Serbian sport policy discourse (ibid.). In this way, although failing to suggest specific measures for furthering the inclusive development of grassroots sport, the national sport policy insists on grassroots sport's increased potential to curtail any form of discrimination and exclusion. Finally, in contrast to the EU policy orientation in sport aimed at specifically furthering issues of inclusion of ethnic minorities, immigrants and diverse socially vulnerable groups in grassroots sporting activities, in order to sustainably network with the wider community, the national sport policy omits to involve a decomposed approach to the vulnerability and deprivation of population vulnerable groups, thus failing to promote the social inclusion of ethnic minorities deprived on multiple bases, such as poverty and different forms of social discrimination (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009).

The mutual conformity of the national and EU sport policies, in the area of prevention and suppression of negative social networking in sport that results in the promotion of diverse forms of discrimination, resides in a zone with a high degree of compliance. The core tenets of both policy frameworks are grounded in the creation and maintenance of social capital as a tool to facilitate implementation of the policy objectives in this respective field (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta

Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b). Hence, both policy discourses, the national and the EU, rely on robust mobilisation of multi-level cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation mechanisms between all relevant parties in combating violence and discrimination in sport, incorporating law enforcement and prevention measures. Additionally, in reaching capacity building and socio-educational policy targets that aim to promote a range of positive social values such as tolerance, non-discrimination and solidarity, both policy streams recognise networking between members of supporter groups, sport organisations, clubs, international sport associations and NGOs, including the relevant state institutions and the wider community as the key preventive measure in fighting violence and intolerance in sport (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b).

In further assembling the zone of convergence of sport policy themes in EU and Serbian policies that promote social capital creation and maintenance in and through sport, active civic engagement in the form of sport volunteerism appears to show a moderate degree of mutual policy incompliance. Still, while the EU policy stream is committed to the promotion of social capital through strengthening volunteering practices in grassroots sport (EC, 2007a, 2007c), Serbian sport policy does not allow for the potential of sport volunteerism to generally assist in promoting active civic participation, social cohesion and democracy through sport (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009), which reflects a more instrumental approach to membership in a civic network. In this sense, while national sport policy recognises the value of volunteering and the need for systematic regulation of this field of civic engagement in sport, it fails to suggest concrete steps in the promotion of formal long-term volunteering and, instead, concentrates mostly on the field of short-term civic engagement in sport. In contrast, and in line with its 'beliefs', the EU adopts a comprehensive policy position on sport volunteerism, stating that this form of active civic engagement 'must be considered as one of the cornerstones of the characteristics of sport in Europe […] [which] is vital to [the] sustainability of amateur sport in particular' (EC, 2007c: 14-15). Besides, considerable overlaps in the sport policy objectives of the two policy discourses concern setting up a system for the recognition of volunteering work, experience and education as 'voluntary activities in sport also have a socio-economic value in terms of GDP and if converted in e.g. full-time employment' (EC, 2007c: 15). Hence, in addition to its potential for social growth,

the instrumental use of sport volunteerism for sport development appears to be of interest to both sport policy-making pools as it bears an implicit economic (and social) value for sport development: '[W]ithout volunteers, sport activities would come at a much higher cost and many of the social activities related to sport would disappear' (ibid.). Ultimately, application of principles of exchange of information and capacity building throughout established networking within the field of sport volunteering, nationally and internationally, commonly features in both policy discourses (EC, 2007a, 2007c; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009).

Eventually, although social capital as a goal has been considerably mainstreamed through the multitude of targets of the EU and national sport policy agendas, as shown above, the principles of policy implementation are to a great extent committed to exercising wide-ranging horizontal and vertical networking between the pool of relevant stakeholders (EC, 2007a, 2007c; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). While the application of this mechanism certainly heightens the relevance of social capital as a tool and resource for sport policy implementation at multiple levels, it equally assists in the establishment of a framework for policy monitoring and evaluation. Yet, while in the domain of networking for evidence-based sport policy-making, the EU promotes cooperation with academia, sport movements and national and European public authorities, in order to yield evidence in fields of policy concern (EC, 2007a, 2011b), Serbian sport policy, on the other hand, omits to declare both—i.e. the commitment to networking for evidence-based policy making and a general orientation towards grounding policy in a sound evidence-base (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013b).

In summary, mainstreaming social capital creation and maintenance including relevant socially cohesive concepts through national sport policy objectives suggests a twofold policy approach. On the one hand, while the national sport policy discourse is concerned with a range of inclusive sport developmental approaches that involve open access to sport for deprived population categories, promotion of equal opportunities in sport, development of values grounded in the promotion of tolerance, solidarity and non-discrimination, including active civic participation in sport, on the other hand, however, it significantly relies on social capital creation and maintenance as a tool for achieving the above policy goals. Still, in this context, the national sport policy often fails to sustain the above commitments into clearly delineated activities or targets followed by policy implementation arrangements, which suggests a lack of evidence-

based policy making and an inability to exercise comprehensive multi-level inter-sectoral, intra-organisational and inter-organisational coordination and cooperation practices in policy making and policy implementation beyond formally institutionalised arrangements. As a consequence, one can argue that, at the core of the policy making rationales in the domain of the social role of sport, are processes of policy transfer of key EU sport policy objectives in response to the macro-level policy harmonisation demands. Still, although efforts of harmonisation with EU sport policy principles have yielded compatible national policy making decisions in the realm of the social role of sport that conceptually encapsulates social capital and the related terms of social inclusion, integration and active civic participation, including the mass promotion of democratic values in and through sport, the zone of divergence between the two sport policy platforms concerns the extent to which these concepts are assigned potential to positively imbue social development through sport and the ways they translate into sport policy targets. Thus, in a comparative fashion, while EU sport policy assigns a wider developmental social role to sport, it is indicative that national sport policies embrace a relatively narrow *in* sport scope for the application of conceptual determinants of social capital. As noted, the reasons for such an approach to national sport policy discourse could include the underpinning orientation toward efforts of the sport system re-establishment, a lack of systematic evidence to sustain policy orientation in this field based on a relevant theoretical concept (Coalter, 2013), limited cross-sectoral and inter-governmental coordination and cooperation or, perhaps, the national government's understanding of the limited potential of sport to assist in wider social engineering.

8.4 Established and Emerging Sports: Responses to National Sport Policy Objectives in the Realm of the Social Role of Sport

In completing the discussion on the sport policy context in Serbia, and the place of the researched sports in this context, this section aims at revisiting the link between sport policy aims and practice in order to ascertain the ways in which, and the extent to which, the GFP and rugby league respond to national sport policy objectives and potentially contribute to evidence-based policy-making process in the domain of the social capital and socially cohesive functions of sport. Hence, the section will reconsider the aspects of social capital creation in and through the researched sports, allied with responses to fostering social inclusion, anti-discrimination and active civic

participation inspected through the perspective of the national sport policy framework, so as to pave the way for discussion in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

As was shown in Chapters 6 and 7, both researched sports are concerned with programmed and/or non-programmed inclusion and integration in and through sport, which has largely been facilitated through social capital creative strategies. Thus, albeit to various degrees and in different aspects, both sports have responded to national policy targets set so as to instruct enhanced participation in sport through inclusion of deprived population categories. Moreover, albeit both sports generally assist national policy objectives with reference to fostering the development of children and youth sport through efforts to widen the participation base, as the evidence from this study suggests, they approach development of this segment of sport policy through particular networking with the educational system—primary and secondary schools and the system of higher education—so as to increase inclusion in sport and thus to widen the participation base (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). In this vein, the practice of the researched sports in establishing and maintaining working relational channels with the education system, through social capital generation, should inform policy-making process with evidence from this area as national policy, though committed to furthering networking between the school system and sport organisations, fails to suggest practical steps in that regard (see Section 8.3). In parallel, if we consider that the barriers to participation in grassroots sport activities, as a consequence of economic deprivation, refer to social exclusion, as suggested by Kelly (2011) and as heralded throughout the NSDS (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008), then both sports have to various degrees, rooted in their strong inclinations toward sport development, assisted in widening the prospects of removing financial constraints to enable increased involvement in sport, of those affected by poverty in Serbia (see Section 7.3) and have, thus, responded to the particular policy orientations in this field. The main principles employed in encouraging and empowering the economically deprived to participate in sport resonate, as previously shown, with the establishment of connectivity strategies with the education system so as to attract more participants into the sport, the granting of open access to participation in sport by abolishing membership fees or the introduction of flexible membership fee schemes, including free participation in certain sport events. Hence, although the national sport policy framework omits to suggest ways in which the social inclusion of children and youth deprived on the basis of poverty should be tackled in and through sport (perhaps because this would mean

that additional state budgetary resources should be secured for grassroots sport at the expense of elite sport), the results from this study indicate that the above inclusionary strategies may, with scarce financial investment but increased social engineering, facilitate social inclusion in sport and could potentially enlighten future policy discourse in this area.

Furthermore, although the national sport policy declares commitment to combating all forms of discrimination in sport that resonate with the promotion of racism, nationalism, xenophobia and homophobia, and to assist in the unabridged participation in sport (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008: 11), as we have seen in the previous section of this chapter, it omits to take a meticulous outlook at the types of deprived categories of population, such as particular ethnic minorities for instance, that are largely under-represented in sport at all levels. Still, as was debated in Chapters 6 and 7, the GFP and rugby league fill the sport policy void by means of programmed but also situationally and contextually bound activities that include integration of the Roma ethnic minority, which is disadvantaged on multiple grounds. On the other hand, through their engagements, the established and emerging sports researched in this study also conform to other national social policies such as the *Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Roma in the Republic of Serbia* (Ministarstvo za ljudska i manjinska prava Republike Srbije, 2010), which foresees the integration of the Roma in mainstream society, *inter alia*, through participation in sport in the local community. Likewise, this fact further proves that the policy-making process in the domain of sport policy does not comprehensively account for corroborations between the policy fields and cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial cooperation throughout this policy process stage. Nonetheless, evidence from this study may potentially inform future policy-making in the field of ethnic minority integration in sport by suggesting that while increased integration of Roma in sport can be achieved through 'competitive integration' (Elling et al., 2001) or the involvement of ethnic minorities in sport to compete with the representatives of the mainstream population (see Section 7.3.1) as an initial first step in opening up the integrational space, as it has been showed in the GFP case, increased potential for community (and cultural) integration of ethnic minorities lies in sustained, long-term, unabridged inclusion in sport as demonstrated through both sports case studies in Chapter 7. In particular, this suggests that social capital engineering in sport has a stake in increasing trends of ethnic minority integration endeavours. Still, as noted earlier, setting up a space for unabridged integration does not

exclude (cultural) discrimination practices, as shown in the case of rugby league (see Section 7.3.3). Manifestations of discrimination are many and those that resonate with the promotion of racism, nationalism and xenophobia have been steadily addressed through the GFP's sport-for-development initiatives (see Chapters 5 and 7). Still, discrimination may show subtle characteristics allied with the use of language or cultural discrimination as forms of covert discrimination and the treatment of ethnic minorities through the 'us and them' perspective. Thus, although bridging across the diversity spectrum in sport has the potential to instigate integration reflected in 'tolerance' for 'others', it appears that meaningful integration is subject to culturally and socially changing projects in a particular contextual setting that require long-term, planned initiatives of multistranded coordination and cooperation at national and local levels, in sport as well as in other cultural and social fields, including empowerment and outreach to those deprived on multiple grounds. State policy certainly has a stake in these matters.

In a similar vein, initiatives for the inclusion in sport of intellectually disabled children and young people through the GFP (see Chapter 7) have gradually responded to policy aims in this realm. However, while this response has resulted in the general conformity to the national policy objectives of furthering development of sport for disabled persons, it has gone a step further by encompassing assistance to the disabled population to participate in sport on an equal basis with representatives of the regular population and has, thus, made additional steps in furthering community level social inclusion and integration. Hence, although these initiatives need to keep the pace with the stipulations of UEFA and the Special Olympics in the domain of grassroots football development for the disabled, they should be taken as indicators to expand the scope of national sport policy-making in the field of the development of 'disability sport' as they forge activities of unabridged integration of the disabled population in and through sport in the local context and, thus, contribute to locally pursued inclusion. On the other hand, however, the expanded treatment of sport for disabled persons through the GFP and assistance to increased community inclusion through sport, is allied with the specific objectives of the national *Strategy for Improvement of the Position of the Persons with Disability*, which envisages wider social inclusion through sport and recreation (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2006: 16). In this respect, evidence for the incompatibility of policies at the macro level, which intersect in certain domains (in this case, of sport) is provided again and again. Correspondingly, this advocates fewer policy declarations and more

practical implementation of commitments to inter and cross-sectoral cooperation, as well as meaningful vertical and horizontal linking with sport movements and the local community.

Furthermore, as was shown in the previous chapter, although instructed through UEFA's programmatic scheme and the platforms of relevant international organisations, the GFP has contributed to driving implementation of national sport policy objectives in the area of bolstering gender equality in sport by enhancing inclusion of girls in football and the moderate involvement of women in programme governance. This has been accomplished through networking with the education system and the local community, in order to foster participation of girls in school football teams, instigating initiatives to establish mono-gender teams that participate in separate leagues for girls, and mixed-team participation at OFFS events (see Section 7.3.1). In addition, the scant (unplanned) involvement of women in the FAS's GFP Network and the initiatives of partnership organisations have moderately improved prospects for achieving gender equality in sport governance. Still, while the NSDS recognises the relevance of international networking in furthering issues of gender equality in sports through assisting in greater capacity building in this segment of sport development (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008), the GFP further fills the policy void by insisting on local community networking and social capital creation in an attempt to achieve greater participation in sport by girls, including through the use of systematic outreach activities that advocate for change of cultural, gender-stereotyping in and around sport (see Chapter 7). In addition, initiatives for strengthening gender equality in grassroots football significantly respond to the goals of the national *Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Women and Gender Equality*, which insists on the promotion, mass-participation, and equal opportunities of women and girls in sport (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2009). Exceptionally, correlation can fully be drawn between the NSDS and the *Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of the Women and Gender Equality*, however, the latter Strategy has responded to the aims of the NSDS in the domain of development of sport for women perhaps because it was endorsed a year after the implementation of the NSDS began. In this respect, the convergence of policy-making and joint inter-sectoral engagement on common policy objectives in the domain of gender equality in sports enlarges the prospects for the employment of social capital as a tool throughout distinctive policy processes.

Finally, the responsiveness of the researched sports to policy objectives in the realm of sport volunteerism is generally allied with the maintenance of long-term, active civic engagement in the delivery and development of these sports. Still, findings show that despite the legislative regulation of this field, voluntary work in both sports suffers from confusion and provisional, organisational regulation, which confirms the need for policy to further regulate volunteer work at the national level (or sport organisations to adequately implement existing regulatory procedures), including efforts to promote voluntary work in sport through supporting expanded networking between sport and non-sport organisations, educational institutions and economy (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008, 2009). Given the extent of external networking engaged in by the researched sports (see Chapter 6) with representatives of other sports, non-sport NGOs, and educational institutions, one could argue that compared to the GFP, rugby league exceedingly supported policy objectives in the promotion of active civic engagement in and through sport. Moreover, evidence from this study, particularly with reference to motivational sources to volunteer in the GFP, justifies an instrumental policy approach to sport volunteerism, reflected in the intention to set the scene for recognition of volunteer work in order to sustain instrumental motives for volunteering and, hence, assist in the maintenance of or increase in trends in sport volunteerism (see Section 7.2.1). Besides, given that evidence from the emerging sport case study points to a 'generational change' as a factor that suppresses positive trends in volunteerism (see Section 7.2.2), justification for policy approaches in this field is provided because the development and promotion of a volunteering culture is envisaged to be fostered through cross-generational networking and support for greater involvement of children and young people in volunteering practices (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2009).

Yet, taken as a whole, the level of conformity of the practices of the researched sports with sport policy objectives is, in the field of sport volunteerism, difficult to assess. This originates from an insufficient, inconsistent and, thus, blurred strategic blueprint for the development of volunteerism in and through sport. Hence, this indirectly confirms that regulating and affecting trends in volunteerism in sport is a difficult task to be achieved through only engagement in the particular social arena, as it is dependent on the wider macro social, cultural, economic and political setting and that in order for it to be positively tackled, it requires multi-level coordinated action by state institutions, sport organisations and the wider community. Additionally, evidence from this study,

embedded in factors that shape trends in volunteerism in sport such as: 1) the issues of 'time and money'; 2) increased demands for capacity building; 3) generational change; 4) narrow trust; 5) expanded norms of reciprocity; and including motives for volunteering that consider: 1) belief in the cause; 2) enthusiasm; 3) social networking; 4) opportunities for personal development; 5) increased social mobility; 6) recognition and potential for future rewards (see Chapter 7), should be taken as relevant in clearing up the future strategic picture for policy engagement in the domain of sport volunteerism. Policy recommendations that result from this research are portrayed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

To sum up, exercised practices in the development and delivery of the established and emerging sports researched in this study indicate a high-degree of conformity to national sport policy aims in the realm of the social role of sport. Furthermore, albeit in differing aspects and degrees, both sports have exceeded the limits of the framework of policy objectives by enriching the platform for activities, specifically in the social inclusion of ethnic minorities in and through sport, setting the conditions for increased inclusion of intellectually disabled children and youth into mainstream society through participation in sport with regular population categories and improving the prospects of setting up standards for the continued involvement of women and girls in sport. In this way, while the researched sports have improved the prospects of social intervention in the domain of sport in general, they have equally responded to national strategic objectives in the realm of macro social development. Similarly, despite the inability of sport policy to suggest steps for decreasing the social exclusion from greater participation in sport of those deprived on the basis of poverty, rugby league and the GFP have filled that void by attracting more participants by abolishing financial barriers to inclusion in sport. Lastly, while volunteerism in sport represents an area of highly unregulated civic engagement field, the researched sports reside around the self-regulated stocks of volunteer engagement and networking for the promotion and development of volunteerism. In this vein, as stated earlier, their working practices may contribute evidence for the advancement of a future policy direction in this and related fields of engagement. In addition, the latter analysis confirms once more the limited ability of policy-makers and relevant state institutions to effectively implement multistranded cooperational and coordinational arrangements in differing policy processes, which suggests that their declared commitment to social capital as a tool in policy process has not been realised to its full potential.

8.5 Summary

The present chapter concludes this thesis's empirical discussion. It has illuminated a number of issues concerning the Serbian sport policy framework and the interpretation of the social role of sport through the conceptual determinants of social capital, including the related concepts of social inclusion, social integration and active civic participation. It has, thus, responded to the fifth research question of this thesis, which concerned the ways in which national sport policy incorporates social capital in its contemporary discourse and shapes the policy context that the researched sports operate in. Equally, this chapter pioneers discussion about the social aspects of sport policy in the context of Serbia and, originally, touches upon the under-researched perspective of intersections between 'central' and 'semi-peripheral' sport policy discourses in the domain of the social role of sport.

In contrast to a holistic understanding of public policy against the backdrop of developed countries (e.g. Green, 2003; Houlihan, 2008; Page, 2006), Serbian policy discourse approaches policy-making from a more constrained perspective, reflected in the development of legislative frameworks and developmental strategies in a particular sphere of public interest (Stojiljković, 2012). The national sport policy discourse conforms to the above understanding of policy, with the view of the most pressing sport development issues that need to be resolved in the context of increased macro institutional and policy restoring circumstances. As a consequence, the processes of evidence-based policy-making, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including the facilitation of policy processes through the generation of horizontal and vertical institutional networks of cooperation that result in social capital creation as a policy tool, are still awaiting space for full and transparent practical application. On the other hand, however, in the absence of full cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial institutional cooperation for mainstreaming particular policy objectives, increased networking around particular (private) group interest in the domain of sport policy has been exercised in the processes of policy-making and implementation. This fact corroborates the ways the dominant political culture of networking is pursued in Serbia (see Chapters 7 and 8), which is itself indicative of 'political social capital' creation (Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011), characterised by the exchange of favours based on established, particularised cultural elements of social capital.

Notwithstanding, sport policy identifies social capital both as a policy goal and a policy tool that can facilitate most aspects of the policy process. Serbian sport policy thus furthers social capital and the related terms that can be generated *in* sport, which refer to increased inclusion of deprived population categories *in* sport, promotion of equal opportunities *in* sport, specifically with a view to inclusion of the disabled, women and girls as well as increased participation by children and young people *in* sport in general. Moreover, policy is firmly committed to the promotion of tolerance, anti-discrimination, and democratic values *in* sport, through the prevention of different forms of violence and discrimination in and around sport. Additionally, sustaining active civic participation through the promotion of sport volunteerism completes the picture of policy interests in the domain of the social role of sport. In this vein, while sport policy is concerned with the benefits of sport development, it fails to meaningfully incorporate a wider social role for sport that the wider community can benefit from. Yet, even in this context, the Serbian sport policy often fails to translate policy commitments into clearly defined targets and, thus, falls short of grounding its objectives in a sound, evidence-based policy approach. As a result, a connection can be established between the demands for EU policy harmonisation in the EU accession processes at the macro policy level and the policy rationale in the domain of the social role of sport embedded in 'policy transfer' endeavours. Again, however, while the ideas and policy themes mainstreamed within the EU sport policy agenda have been 'transferred' to the national sport policy discourse, so as to respond to the EU policy commitments in the realm of the social role of sport, the level of treatment of particular objectives that assist in sport and wider social development apparent in the two policy discourses differs, with national sport policy reflecting a limited, analytically weak approach to the wider social relevance of sport. As evidence from this research suggests, the reasons for such treatment of pro-social sport policy issues relates to the placement of policy focus on the sport system re-establishment, a weak evidence pool to sustain pro-social sport policy objectives, including underdeveloped inter-governmental cooperation and coordination on overlapping policy objectives (EC, 2007a, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008).

Finally, from the treatment of the social role of sport in established and emerging sports, that was extensively discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, it can be argued that the position of the researched sports within pro-social sport policy context, as discussed in this chapter, reflects positive conformity with national sport policy orientation in fostering social

inclusion, social integration and active civic participation in sport. Additionally, the zone of conformity between policy objectives and the practices of the researched sports is enriched through the establishment of a practical platform for bolstering a range of socially cohesive processes in and through these sports. This refers most notably to the decomposed treatment of the inclusion of vulnerable population categories in and through sport, and contribution to curtailing poverty-based social exclusion of children and young people in sport. Furthermore, unlike sport policy-making practices, through practically exceeding sport policy's objectives limits, the researched sports have met some of the objectives of relevant national strategies concerned with different aspects of social development and have, thus, affected the scope of sport's wider social impact. Indeed, while evidence from this study has the potential to inform future policy-making efforts in the domain of social capital and socially cohesive operations in and through sport, it equally calls for the wider application of inter-sectoral and intra-sectoral collaboration and exchange so as to further the declared commitment to social capital as a tool in multiple sport policy ventures. Although the thesis has already drawn a number of implications of the collected findings, the following chapter turns to a systematic presentation of conclusions and policy recommendations.

CHAPTER 9. Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This thesis is about the opportunities for 'positive futures' in and through established and emerging sports in Serbia. It sets out to pioneer the qualitative investigation of the social significance of sport in the challenging social context of Serbian society via the social capital theoretical prism. It is, thus, about the change for positive futures, reflected in the nexus between, sport, social capital and context. The change in this study is considered as the process of development (or de-development), in which social capital creation and distribution mechanisms, including the set of instigated socially cohesive processes, have been proved to be significant stimuli for the researched sports and the wider communities in the given macro context.

The impetus for investigating this change for positive futures was shaped largely by a dearth of empirical research on sport's potential to affect positive social development in the specific, semi-peripheral context of Serbian society. But it was also shaped, by the inclination to contribute to the limited body of knowledge on the nature of social capital in sport, and in general, in the context of Serbian society.

The conclusion commences by revisiting the principal aim and specific objectives of the study through the systematic provision of answers to the previously outlined research questions, accompanied by a discussion of the theoretical and empirical contribution of this study. Finally, implications for policy through a set of policy recommendations and some directions for future research are suggested.

9.2 Research Aim and Questions Revisited: The Theoretical and Empirical Contribution of the Study

This study was broadly inspired by ideas from the contemporary sport development discourse, which argue that sport may be directed towards wider social objectives (Spaaij, 2011) reflected in its capacity to contribute to the creation of stocks of social capital, which impact on processes of social integration, social inclusion, and active civic participation, including the promotion of tolerance, inter-cultural understanding, reconciliation and interethnic dialogue and, thus, community development (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2007; Harris, 1998; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008; Hughson et al., 2005;

Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Spaaij, 2011). Therefore, as was discussed in the introductory note and in Chapter 4, the main aim of this thesis has been to critically determine the social implications of sport for a multitude of communities, interacting in and through established and emerging sports in the context of Serbian society. In particular, through in-depth qualitative investigation, the study has sought to evidence the extent to which, and the ways in which, established and emerging sports foster or impede the creation of different forms of social capital—the focus being on the correlation between sport development and community development through sport in the Serbian social context and the abilities of these sports to assist in socially cohesive processes. Moreover, in an attempt to comprehensively capture the context for development in and through sport, the sport public policy discourse in the domain of social capital and particular socially cohesive processes was explored with the final objective to suggest a set of public policy recommendations in the current chapter.

While remaining committed to the above stated aim and objectives, the underlying intention of the study has been to instigate scholarly and policy-making thinking, on the social development potential of sport, as current literature on the social aspects of sport in Serbia are predominantly focused on exploration of sport's (and particularly football's) place in instilling negative social ends linked to violence, hooliganism, nationalism and racism as a pressing social, political and cultural problem (e.g. Kovač, 2005; Mills, 2009; Nielsen, 2010; Savković, 2010). Moreover, although the research was not designed to yield theoretical implications, but to employ social capital as the study's conceptual framework, it has provided a deeper understanding of the significance, position and the interplay between cultural elements of social capital through investigation of emerging and established sports in this particular social context. The theoretical and empirical contributions of the study will be portrayed through a set of answers to the research questions of the thesis.

The discussion in the introductory chapter of this thesis, including discussion of the methodological aspects of the study, outlined five research questions, which along with the conceptual framework of the research have guided the investigation towards addressing the main research aim and objectives of the thesis. In this respect, each of the research questions will be discussed systematically along with the theoretical and empirical contribution of the thesis in the particular area.

Research Question 1

What are the developmental and organisational contexts of the grassroots football programme and rugby league in Serbia?

The contemporary developmental context of Serbian sport, including its social history, is poorly documented, while its characteristics within this context, inspected from the perspective of social capital are essentially *terra incognita*. Although of a small scale in this study, discussion of the meso sporting context in Serbia (see Chapter 3), which has aimed to set the ground for positioning the grassroots football programme and rugby league within a wider sporting setting, indicates that the period after the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the break with the regimes of the old system, evoked an era of precarious transformative processes in the country, the sport system being no exception. Today, as the research findings have shown, the sport system in Serbia still faces transitional disorientation, which resonates with the blurriness of the ways in which systematic change is to be pursued. Nonetheless, organisationally and financially, the sport system operates between governmental and non-governmental sport sectors with the role of the state remaining predominant in direct and indirect financial, policy and organisational system jurisdictions (e.g. Sportski savez Srbije, 2012; Šuput, 2009), including the provision of support for enhanced networking and co-operation between the governmental and non-governmental sport sectors (Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). Yet, as the evidence reveals, structural holes, inherent to the inability to sustainably bridge particular network entities (Burt, 2005), still exist between the key actors in this system (I4.3).

Central to answering the first research question is, however, the evolution of the researched sports in the wider and meso sporting contexts. Being rarely documented in the literature, the evidence that contributes to answering this research question has, thus, offered original insight into their developmental nature in Serbia. By explicitly examining the evolution of grassroots football and rugby league through the respondents narratives, official documentation and documents from private archives (see Chapter 5), the study has shed light on the intricacy of factors and processes that have affected their developmental trajectories. Yet, while development of the GFP is a largely contemporary phenomenon, organisationally structured in 2009 through the FAS, investigation of rugby league's developmental trajectory has been portrayed in two phases of evolution—from 1953 to 1964 and from 2001 to today.

As we have seen, although football's developmental span in Serbia is relatively long, structured meso level governance of this sport at the grassroots level is a product of recent activity by the FAS in this area and is facilitated through UEFA's grassroots football developmental mission in Europe. The programme aims to increase football development and comprehensively instigate development through football in Serbia, through the employment of a wide range of networking practices as key governance and organisational principles. Yet, as the findings from the study have suggested, being still in its inception phase, the programme's mission is imperilled by paltry organisational capacities, chiefly rooted in the lack of human capital and the blurriness in the allocation and availability of financial resources. Moreover, while the wider social context has been reported to impair the programme's sustainable delivery and its outcomes, omission to programme activities in line with risk assessment of meso and macro contextual factors, bears responsibility for developmental, organisational and financial pitfalls faced by the programme. Still, despite its infancy, the programme has progressed towards positioning itself as a binder of dispersed football actors concerned with development in and through football in Serbia.

In exploring the evolutionary trajectories of rugby league in both stages of its development, this thesis has, in a synthesised but rather modest manner pioneered the socio-historical tracking of this sport's development in Serbia. In doing so, the thesis has revealed cyclic dynamics of the emergence of rugby codes, their rises and falls, and thus the unique evolutionary path of rugby league in both stages of its development in Serbia. In particular and in partial contrast to the developmental traditions of rugby codes in their heartlands (Collins, 2006), while rugby league served as a hub for rugby union development in its first evolving phase in Serbia, contemporary expansion of this sport is rooted in the practices of its rival code, a number of whose members initiated gradual steps away from the union code in favour of the league code. Yet, unlike in their country of origin, the differences between the codes in the second evolutionary phase of this sport in Serbia were not motivated by the amateur versus professional dichotomy including social class divides, but rather by the different visions of development of this sport in Serbia. In the case of the new emerging league code, this was based on a strong developmental inclination underpinned by principles of cooperation that often bridged different 'others' in mutual activism devoted to the sport's development (see Section 5.3). In this vein, as has been shown, the development of this amateur sport (in both phases of its evolution) has significant roots in stocks of

locally created social capital, which has been vital in compensating for the lack of financial and human capital in advancing development of this sport. Although the historical account of rugby league's development in its first phase is important in contextualising its emerging nature, including the incentives for and impediments to development, central to this thesis has been the investigation of the contemporary evolution and organisational workings of this sport in Serbia on which, the examination of the nature of social capital in and through rugby league is later based. In this respect, as was suggested in Section 5.3.2, the genesis of the organisational setting of this sport resides in the pool of activities undertaken by a group of players active in the first rugby league club to emerge from rugby union. Through their engagement and the exponentially increasing involvement of emerging club members, the Serbian Rugby League Federation was established to strategically guide sport development at the national (and international) level, while giving a progressive impetus, chiefly grounded in effective use of resources stemming from astute social engineering, to clubs, leagues and divisions to emerge and further develop on the rugby league scene.

In summing up the empirical contribution of this thesis in answering the first research question, it is indicative that although not to an extensive level, the portrayed evidence enhances our understanding of the contexts for development of the researched sports by slightly shifting attention to the relevance of active engagement in social networks for their developmental purposes. In addition, the study has provided insight into the previously undocumented evolution of rugby league in Serbia, in both stages of its development.

Research Question 2

What is the nature of social capital in the context of the researched sports?

Chapter 6 provided answers to the second research question by enhancing the understanding of the nature of social capital in the researched sports in their contemporary developmental stage. This was done, on the one hand, via investigation of the nature and the interplay between key social capital elements in the domain of sport—networks, trust and norms of reciprocity, including exploration of factors that underpin the resulting nature of social capital—and, on the other hand, through re-composition of obtained outcomes into a social capital model for established and emerging sports. In more abstract terms, answering this question places emphasis on the dynamic and transferable nature of extracted social capital models.

Firstly, by examining the nature of patterns of connections (Burt, 2005), which resonate with forms of networking in and through sport organisations—of the GFP and rugby league—the intention was to capture the processes that are key to social capital creation in the domain of its structural component. The findings of this study suggest that, in both sports, networks within multiple structural levels of operation, through which information, recognition and influence are enabled to flow are dynamic categories characterised by different levels of formality and informality, strong and weak ties, yet with dominant informal and dense forms of relational exchanges employed both internally and externally. However, the findings of this thesis reveal that rugby league, unlike the GFP, has succeeded in mobilising an increased number of formal networks with external partners, led by the strong developmental inclinations of this sport, which corroborates Bourdieu's (1986) suggestion about positive correlation between the volume of networks mobilised by social agents and the level of social capital generated. Moreover, these findings lend the weight to Putnam's and Feldstein's (2003) suggestion that the 'multi-strandedness' of social networks is exactly what characterises dynamic processes of intersection and overlapping between network types and circles. On the other hand, while confirming previous debates in the literature about sport's capacity to instil dense and more informal social networks in internal relational exchanges (e.g. Nichols et al., 2012; Seippel, 2008; Vermueulen and Verweel, 2009), corroborating Lin's comments on the vast potential of informal social networks to generate social capital (2001), the findings of this study are inconsistent with some indications in the literature about team sports being avenues for the fostering of formal and weak networking practices (e.g. Hoye and Nicholson, 2011; Miesner and Doherty, 2012; Putnam, 2000).

Secondly, trust and norms of reciprocity, as the essence of social capital generation and reproduction (Long, 2008; Putnam, 2000), have been investigated in this study in order to bring to attention the relevance of these particular elements of social capital production and reproduction in and through sport through the qualitative examination of their levels, types and mutual interdependency. While the corpus of literature on social capital and sport has dealt with the significance of these cultural elements of the concept for social advancement in and through sport against the backdrop of developed and developing contexts (e.g. Misener and Doherty, 2012; Nichols et al., 2012; Schulenkorf, 2013; Schulenkorf et al., 2011), perspectives on the interplay between trust and norms of reciprocity and the position of these elements in the social capital model for sport has

rarely been addressed. The emerging discussion from this thesis has, thus, contributed to filling this void. In this vein, the study's findings suggest that, while levels of trust in and around both sports proved to be rather underdeveloped and, if and where developed, tend to reflect a highly particularised nature, confirming Rohe's (2004) and Foley and Edwards' (1999) accounts about the possibilities for vast interaction and cooperation in a community with little developed trust, the norms of reciprocity, both particular and generalised, hold a central position in models of social capital generation, but with an ascendant, generalised character that correlates with Putnam's stance on the centrality of norms of reciprocity in social capital generation and maintenance endeavours (2000). In addition, being directly dependent on the position of the sport in the sport developmental spectrum, and inversely proportional to the developmental stage of the researched sports, the findings of this thesis suggest that norms of generalised reciprocity have a stronger potential to impose development at multiple levels in and around the *emerging* sport case study. Moreover, comments from both case studies reveal that trust created in the field of sport is a dynamic category dependent upon reputation and good governance, as stated by Schulenkorf and his colleagues (2011), including work discipline, responsibility, work results, friendships, and time of engagement in a particular network as this research has indicated, while norms of reciprocity in both sports are contingent on one sole factor—the contribution to the collective aim of sport development. Thus, the relative independence and recurrently mismatching nature of trust and norms of reciprocity created in and through the researched sports has its genesis in the differing factors and motives that shape their levels and types. This yields theoretical and empirical implications in the domain of the social capital concept and the nexus between sport and social capital, but related to a specific meso sporting and macro context. Yet, overlapping spaces between the types of these two cultural elements of social capital exist in external, vertical networks of connections with the local community that feature the advancement of individual or group interests through sport (Numerato, 2011; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012). In these relational constellations, both trust (where developed) and norms of reciprocity exhibit a particularised relational nature. This adds to previously suggested findings by scholars who have contended that low levels of particularised trust and particularised exchange of favours in vertical connections with formal systems widely characterise Serbian social spaces (Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin et al., 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Gordy, 2004, 2013; Stojiljković and Mihajlović, 2010), while it also contradicts Stolle's suggestion about the limited ability of vertical connections to establish reciprocal

relations (2003). Furthermore, while evidence of nonlinear levels and the mismatching nature of trust and norms of reciprocity collected in the Serbian context of established and emerging sports has challenged existing debate in the literature that suggests equivalence between cultural social capital elements (Putnam, 2000; Stolle, 2003; Van Deth, 2003), it has equally shed light on the key position of generalised norms of reciprocity in social capital creation in sport (Putnam, 2000).

Ultimately, the meticulous investigation of the nature of social capital elements in this thesis has facilitated the determination of social capital models for the researched sports (see Sections 6.2.3 and 6.3.3). Through this investigation, it has become clear that social capital in both sports is characterised by a dynamic, transformative nature, whose dynamism is situationally and contextually bounded (Gress, 2004; Numerato, 2011; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Rohe, 2004; Spaaij, 2011). Thus, as the findings from this research have indicated, a clear distinction between theoretically determined forms of social capital—bonding, bridging and linking (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 1998; 2001)— in the researched sports is not fully possible (Hughson et al., 2005; Putnam, 2000). The resulting social capital models are, hence, considered to be a display of different positions of relational constellations in the researched sports on the bonding-bridging social capital axis, whereas linking social capital has been inspected in intersections of bonding and bridging characteristics of the resulting social capital elements, on the same social capital typology axis. In this respect, the findings of this study have shown that, although norms of reciprocity developed in and around the GFP have impacted the extension of weak bridges in networking practices in this programme, the levels and types of trust, including levels of informal networks developed characterised by a number of structural holes existing between networks' entities (including the transformative nature of bridging social capital) have resulted in a social capital model that, on the bridging-bonding axis, appears to be closer to the bonding social capital pole. On the other hand, the model for social capital in rugby league intersects between bonding and bridging forms, with generalised norms of reciprocity adjoining social capital in this sport closer to the bridging pole on the social capital typology axis. Besides, by examining the experience of research respondents in the domain of relational principles established in vertical connections with local and national institutional agents, it has emerged that although linking social capital tends to reflect a bonding relational architecture in both sports at the local level—corresponding with models of establishing linkages with institutional agents in the field of sport in the

context of semi-peripheral societies, as suggested by Numerato (2011)—in rugby league, the potential for the development of bridging traits of linking social capital is enhanced through networking with national-level state bodies. The above findings also provide additional evidence for the circulation of 'political social capital', considered to be a form of linking social capital that dominates local level social relations with institutional agents in the context of Serbian society (Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin et al., 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011). In this vein, the present study has confirmed previous indications in the literature about sport's potential to instil both bonding (e.g. Kobayashi et al., 2013; Nichols et al., 2012; Nicholson and Hoye, 2008; Spaaij, 2011; Spaaij and Westerbeek, 2010; Vermueulen and Verweel, 2009; Walseth, 2008) and bridging social capital (Coalter, 2010; Hoye and Nicholson, 2011; Jarvie, 2003; Misener and Doherty, 2012; Perks, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Seippel, 2006; Welty Peachey et al., 2013) that will dynamically circulate and transform in the context of sport (Hughson et al., 2005; Spaaij, 2011), while adding the perspective of the developmental stage that the sport resides in and the particular local context, as key factors affecting the social capital model of the studied sports. Thus, the change is immanent to the forms of social capital in sports because social capital models are dynamic and transferable categories whose dynamism is rooted in processes of development or de-development. In these constellations, however, bonding social capital proves to be the more stable, static force, having the ability to self-reproduce, and in many instances to maintain the relational *status quo*. Yet, those who bond need to bridge so as to reach further stages of development in the particular sporting and wider contexts. It is, accordingly, the interplay between these forms that constitutes the dynamic model of social capital in sports, in multi-level contexts.

In summary, while this study has contributed to existing literature by extending perspectives on the nexus between sport and social capital, in the context of semi-peripheral Serbia, it has simultaneously yielded theoretical implications via qualitative investigation of the interplay between trust and norms of reciprocity, including their positioning in a given social capital model.

Research Question 3

How does social capital generated in and through the researched sports contribute to the development of social cohesion, via active civic participation, social inclusion, and social integration?

The third research question of this thesis was set to investigate the potential of social capital models operating in the researched sports to imbue multiple community benefits via socially cohesive processes, including exploration of the nexus between the nature of social capital and the nature of socially cohesive processes, instigated in and through established and emerging sports.

Firstly, by examining steady, long-term volunteering practices in the GFP and rugby league as a form of active civic participation and a marker of social cohesion (e.g. Cuskelly, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Donoghue, 2001; Harvey et al., 2007; Putnam, 2000), the discussion in Section 7.2 has provided a meticulous account of the nature of sport volunteerism in both sports, including its relationship with a particular social capital model derived for the studied sports. In this vein, as evidence suggests, trends in volunteerism in both case studies gravitate around instigated degrees and types of norms of reciprocity and trust. Yet, while the decrease in volunteerism in the explored sports is contingent on the levels and types of developed trust, including the scope of external network mobilisation and the individual position of volunteers in the wider macro context, norms of reciprocity and the pool of extrinsic volunteer motives retain positive trends on sport volunteering. Although consistent with Seippel's (2006), Tonts's (2005), Putnam's (2000) and Nichols et al. (2012), suggestions on direct links between trends in volunteerism and levels of (generalised) trust developed in sport, this research additionally demonstrates that positive or stable trends in sport volunteerism are reliant on the ways norms of reciprocity are employed within the established and emerging sporting contexts, indicating that the position of sports in their meso contexts affects the way active civic participation is developed and maintained via norms of reciprocity. Taken together, these results suggest that there is congruence between the nature of social capital and the nature of volunteerism in the investigated sports.

In this manner, the research results demonstrate that the GFP is beset with an unstable, yet declining nature of volunteerism that corresponds with the prevailingly bonding social capital developed in this sport, including its limited potential to impact wider community cohesion endeavours but still featuring the capacity to instil fragmented,

inner social cohesion in dense networks of connections, thus adding additional facts to existing debate on the nexus between bonding social capital and volunteering in sports (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Cuskelly, 2008; Nichols et al., 2012). In contrast, underpinned by strong norms of reciprocity developed, both 'doing with' and 'doing for' have been sustained within rugby league, extending the radius of social cohesion via joint engagement in rugby league and the wider community. In this way, there is enough evidence to suggest the role of generalised norms of reciprocity, a trait of bridging social capital, in promoting active civic participation in sport and the wider community that revolves around the previously instigated debate of a positive correlation between sport volunteerism and bridging social capital (e.g. Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Putnam, 2000; Seippel, 2006, 2008, 2010). On the other hand, however, the level of inner engagement is additionally contingent on the degree that the *ethos* of rugby league is developed, which, *inter alia*, presumes the reproduction of a sense of belonging through enforcement of masculine identities on and off the pitch, underpinning the ways volunteerism and social inclusion/exclusion, hence socially cohesive processes, are exercised in this sport. Yet, although the exercise of masculine identities may restrict inner engagement and reciprocal relations to the degree of displayed masculinities, positive trends in the emergence of transformative or inclusive masculinities (Anderson and McGuire, 2010) revealed in the realm of this sport reflect the ways in which 'othering' within masculine spaces may underpin inner socially cohesive processes. This aspect of social capital and socially cohesive processes originally adds to the generally underdeveloped debate on the nexus between gender regimes, social capital and sport in a particular social context (Cuskelly, 2008; Spaaij, 2011, 2012, 2013).

Secondly, in addition to active civic participation, the agenda for social cohesion that predisposes collaboration for mutual advancement reflects how social inclusion and social integration are exercised in and around the researched sports (e.g. Choeng et al., 2007; Easterly et al., 2006; Jeannotte, 2008; Spoonley et al., 2005). This thesis has, therefore, instigated discussion about the degree to which the socially inclusive and/or integrative processes for different deprived population categories (the poor, ethnic minorities, the intellectually disabled, girls/women) are enacted and how they relate to social capital models developed in the established and emerging sports.

In this manner, the findings from the GFP case study allude to the potential of this sport programme to instil socially integrative practices at both organisational and sport participation levels, yet the benefits for multiple communities are of a limited scale due

to, on the one hand, structural, system-based and cultural barriers for inclusion associated with the broader sporting and social context, while on the other hand, the nature of social capital developed in and around this sport. Thus, this evidence has suggested, that the model of social capital created in this sport is positively associated with the ways in which social inclusion and social integration in and through sport contribute to multiple community benefits. Hence, strategically programmed objectives to integrate, or re-integrate and reconcile diversities in and through sport may be achieved by means of bonding social capital that on the level of sport participation has been transformed from initially established, programmatically pursued weak, bridging ties aimed at instigating and sustaining the involvement in sport of those deprived on multiple grounds, into dense, identity forged social relations that, *inter alia*, revolve around common sporting identities, as proposed by Vermeulen and Verweel (2009). According to the findings of this thesis, however, community benefits resulting from socially inclusive processes, as a marker of social cohesion in and through sport, are contingent on the sustainability of contributing activities that, in the case of the established sport, is undermined by collaborative organisational practices that to a large degree reflect bonding social capital traits. These findings contribute, therefore, to the still underdeveloped debate on the ability of bonding social capital in sport to affect community benefits, by instigating socially inclusive processes (Coalter, 2007, 2010; Spaaij, 2011) and simultaneously locks horns with some academic and policy perspectives on an exclusively positive link between bridging social capital and the wider community benefits that arise from socially inclusive endeavours (e.g. CoE, 2001; Jeannotte, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Ravanera, 2008). Besides, the present thesis provides additional evidence to claim sport's documented capacity to affect wider social inclusion and the social integration agenda. Yet, this capacity is of a narrow scope if not employed in collaboration with other institutional and policy fields to create an increased integrative impact in the community (Bailey, 2005; Hylton 2013; Kelly, 2011) and if context-specific factors that affect socially inclusive processes are not strategically envisaged (Choeng et al., 2007).

On the other hand, however, as was discussed in Section 7.3.3 of this thesis, social inclusion and social integration in rugby league result from non-programmed, situationally and contextually shaped initiatives motivated by commitment to the sport's development at multiple levels of sport organisation while facilitated by the active involvement of rugby league members in bridging across a spectrum of diverse ethnic,

cultural and social backgrounds in sustaining the mutual sport developmental. But a closer look at socially integrative processes in this sport, particularly with regards to the Roma ethnic minority, has revealed that although initial bridging has assisted in moving social, cultural and ethnic barriers, thus enlarging prospects for wider social cohesion, it still does not exclude 'othering' accompanied by discriminatory practices within the 'integration space' that resonate with social and cultural stereotyping of those 'unlike us'. On the other hand, however, although the stereotyping of Roma players' superior physical abilities, as one of the key factors that contribute to their increased integration in this sport bolsters symbolic distinctiveness or covert discrimination practices, it simultaneously assists in affirmation of sporting identities (Long et al., 1997) that bridge across cultural and social group traits and, thus, positively contribute to inner social cohesion via support for integration of 'others'. Thus, while this research adds to the existing debate on positive associations between bridging social capital and socially cohesive processes, hence social integration and inclusion in general (e.g. Briggs, 2004; Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Szreter, 2002) and in sport in particular (e.g. Coalter, 2010; Harris, 1998; Hoye and Nicholson, 2011; Seippel, 2006; Welty Peachey et al., 2013; Zakus et al., 2009), in agreement with Spaaij (2011), it suggests that an inherently positive role for bridging social capital in instilling social leverage should be revisited, as bridging social engineering is not liberated from reproduction of social divisions, including discriminatory practices towards those who entered the integration space of sport.

In summary, this study empirically contributes to the current debate on the social benefits of sport via discussion of the nexus between the nature of social capital and the nature of socially cohesive processes, in the context of semi-peripheral Serbia. Hence, while it has confirmed a direct link between the nature of social capital created in and around sport and the nature of socially cohesive processes instilled in the context of sport and wider communities, with norms of reciprocity having a central position in affecting positive social change, it equally adds significance to the still underdeveloped debate about bonding social capital's capacity to maintain socially cohesive processes while calling for the revisiting of the dominant discourse about the inherently positive social role of bridging social capital.

Research Question 4

How/why does the social context of Serbian society impact on the development of social capital in and through sport?

This research question sought to explore the place and role of contextual factors in shaping sport social capital models, including the resulting socially cohesive processes. Hence, the relevance of wider contexts for the creation of particular models of social capital in and through sports has been recurrently discussed throughout the empirical chapters of this study. Thus, while Chapter 5 has set out an organisational, meso-contextual framework for the development of established and emerging sports, in Chapter 7 and 8 discussion has been expanded around the relevance of the wider social, economic, political and cultural settings for social capital creation, maintenance and reproduction in and through the researched sports.

Firstly, the findings of this thesis have repeatedly alluded to replication of the dominant culture of political (often non-institutional) networking in the field of amateur sports, thus impacting on the ways linking social capital, particularly at a local level, has been created, manifested and reproduced as a developmental resource in both established and emerging sports. Hence, the narratives from the study have underlined that through interest-led political networking, various levels of corruption, clientelism and conflict of interests have been exercised particularly through inducement of particularised norms of reciprocity that have facilitated the exchange of favours for individual (political) and group (sport) advancement. Moreover, results from the emerging sport case study have indicated that an active approach to the instigation of political networking is a route to increased recognition of the sport within the Serbian sport system, which can lead to enhanced institutional embeddedness and, thus, accelerated development. All this serves as an additional empirical contributor to the on-going academic and policy debate about the stake politics has in networking with formal systems in the context of Serbian society (Cvetičanin, 2012; Cvetičanin et al., 2012; Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Lošonc, 2003) that resonates with the principles of creation of context-specific linking social capital or, as Cvetičanin suggests 'political social capital' (2012), including the ways in which the culture of networking operates, is nurtured and is linked to the specific social context. While pursuing the development of particular group or individual agendas, the research findings confirm that this sort of linking social capital may negatively affect wider or collective social development (Long, 2008; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Putnam 2000).

Secondly, the increasing scale of economic deprivation that characterises Serbian social spaces plays a role in how social capital is created in and through sport, including the ways in which volunteerism and socially inclusive processes are developed and manifested (see Sections 7.2 and 7.3). The implications of the Serbian economic context on trends of volunteerism in sports, as was overwhelmingly confirmed by the interviewees, chiefly resonates with shortfalls of 'time and money', including the prioritisation of individual over collective interests that is a result of unfavourable individual economic positions in the wider social and economic context. While issues of 'time and money' have (in the context of developed countries) been underlined in the existing literature as preventive of steady or increased civic participation in sport and in general (Cuskelly, 2008; Donnelly and Harvey, 2013; Putnam, 2000), in the context of Serbian society, which has long faced prolonged social and economic reforms reflected, *inter alia*, in increasing unemployment trends and poverty rates, as has previously been discussed in this thesis, these issues have lent additional weight to the manifestation of trends and the nature of volunteer engagement in sport and the resulting community benefits. But not only that, the implication of the economic context corresponds to the ways in which social relations, including values and norms transform, both in general (Gordi, 2001) and in sport in particular, which within the scope of this research, notably relates to grassroots football. In this vein, as the evidence suggests, the treatment of children as 'business' (Blagojević-Hughson, personal communication, April 2013), with a view to future financial gains, which includes the development of particularised relational principles between parents and coaches in the sporting environment, reflects how the present economic context undermines positive individual and collective social development in and through sport and indicates its de-cohesive potential in the wider Serbian social setting. In addition, an indirect link between the wider economic context and social engineering in the realm of sport is further established in the promotion of a culture of negative values. This is done through acts of violence and aggression perpetrated by parents and coaches on and around the pitch, which assist the transfer of negative value systems in the domain of social relations established between sport participants and has an undermining effect on the development of an inclusive sporting culture.

Thus, while the present study has contributed to the on-going debate about the multi-layered context-dependency of social capital creation and manifestation in and through sport and in general (e.g. Adam and Rončević, 2003; Choeng et al., 2007; Elling et al.,

2001; Foley and Edwards, 1999; Gress, 2004; Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Numerato, 2011; Numerato and Baglioni, 2012; Putnam, 2000; Putnam and Goss, 2002; Rohe, 2004; Schuller, 2007; Sharpe, 2006; Spaaij, 2011; Van Deth, 2003; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000), it further suggests however, that the macro 'transitional' and semi-peripheral social context, characterised by increasing economic deprivation, distortion of social and cultural values and wide-spread politically forged networking practices, more robustly underpins processes of social capital creation and its manifestation in sport compared to those in developed societies. This represents one of the key modelling aspects of social engineering in and around the researched sports. Thus, this study has gone some way in partially answering calls by Elling et al. (2001) to engage in recognition of multi-layered contextual and structural factors underpinning socially cohesive processes, with the view of the Serbian 'transitional', semi-peripheral context, and has thus contributed additional evidence to the existing literature on the focal relevance of contexts in sport social capital research.

Research Question 5

How/why does Serbian sport policy address issues of social capital development in sport and in the community through sport?

Finally, building on the role of context in social capital generation and maintenance, the investigation of the sport policy discourse from a social capital perspective has been the focus of the fifth research question of this thesis. In this vein, results obtained in Chapter 8 of this study have contributed to instigating debate on the public policy perspective of sport's wider social role, in the Serbian policy context, in order to examine the role of the state in creating an environment for the production and maintenance of social capital and related socially cohesive processes in and through sport.

Thus, in reflecting on the macro-level policy processes restoring momentum, key Serbian sport policies, understood in the national context as a set of legislative and strategic policy documents, (Lazaravić et al., 2013; Stojiljković, 2012) have been initiated with the view to reforming the sport system in Serbia, through the creation of a policy baseline that addresses the most pressing issues of the national sport system. Likewise, in a restorative spirit, the national sport policy framework has embraced the key sport policy documents of the UN, the EU and the CoE that, amongst other things, promote the wider social role for sport and the relevance of social capital as a tool in

policy processes (see Section 8.2 and 8.3.1). However, while failing to be grounded in solid stocks of evidence for policy-making, including evidence necessary for the evaluation of the results of policy implementation, and albeit 'official' reliance on the range of social capital resources to be generated in consultative processes with relevant stakeholders for policy-making decisions, the study's findings, in line with Bramham's (2008) and Coalter's (2013) indications, have pointed out that the phases of sport policy processes reflect the dynamics of the degree of the interest groups' capacities and/or powers to place particular policy topics on the sport policy-making agenda. In this setting, social capital plays a significant role as a tool for the advancement of particular (private and political) policy preferences. According to the evidence from this study, vertical and horizontal networking within the policy-making space is exercised through the creation of reciprocal relations that facilitate the advancement of particular policy interests, confirming once again that linking social capital, created in vertical networks with particular interests groups, reflects principles of 'political social capital' generation within the Serbian institutional space, as suggested by Cvetičanin and Popescu (2011). On the other hand, while interest-led networking in sport policy-making displays a wider ambit, multi-level cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial institutional networking on mutual policy objectives has shown to reside at the periphery of the sport policy context. This suggests that, although promoted in the sport policy discourse, social capital has had limited application as a policy tool at a formal institutional level.

Central in responding to the current research question is, however, the discussion raised in Section 8.3 that deals with the location of the social capital concept, both as a policy tool and policy goal, and the related themes of social cohesion within the national sport policy realm. Hence, while the analysis has demonstrated the commitment of national sport policy to further generation and maintenance of social capital and socially cohesive processes *in* sport—by setting up policy priorities facilitating inclusion and integration of deprived population categories *in* sport, the promotion of equality, tolerance and, thus, anti-discrimination through enhancing networking practices to suppress negative social capital manifested in the form of nationalism, racism, xenophobia and homophobia *in* sport, and the promotion of civic engagement through regulation of sport volunteerism as social capital policy goals, including multi-level networking and cooperation as an instrument for the effective pursuit of the entire policy process—it has also indicated that the national policy discourse insufficiently deals with the position of sport in a wider social context from the perspective of its role

in the development of communities (EC, 2007a, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008) as it shows this to be a common principle in the contexts of the key EU sport policies, including those developed in, for example, the British, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand contexts (Coalter, 2007; Hoye and Nicholson, 2008, 2009). This is simultaneously a central area of divergence between the Serbian and EU policy platforms in the domain of the social role of sport. This is not surprising, however, considering the restorative momentum of the national sport policy discourse and the institutional context in which sport policy is developing. This context includes the fact that sport policy-making is in its infancy, which has directed the policy focus more to the re-establishment of the main developmental pillars of sport. In this context, the social role of sport, in a broader perspective, has remained at the fringes of policy-making. Thus, from the perspective of the treatment of social capital as a sport policy goal and a tool for policy-making and implementation, this study has demonstrated that—as is the case in a number of developed sport policy contexts (see Hoye and Nicholson, 2008, 2009)—social capital and related socially cohesive concepts are not the prime concern of the national sport policy discourse. In the context of Serbian sport policy-making, as the analysis suggests, incorporation of elements of the concept of social capital into the policy discourse is rather a reflection of the EU 'policy transfer' endeavours that, in responding to mandatory macro policy harmonisation processes on the road to EU accession, have embraced 'central' sport policy objectives that promote the relevance of social capital and related socially cohesive concepts (EC, 2007a, 2007c, 2011b; Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije, 2008). As a result, the national sport policy discourse often fails to define clear targets and activities that promote the creation of social capital in (and through) sport, including the promotion of social inclusion and integration and active civic participation. Equally, even when defined, policy targets and objectives lack justification according to principles of evidence-based policy-making, including limited strategies developed for policy evaluation. Thus, it seems that embracing the main themes of social capital in the national sport policy discourse gained currency through policy-makers' attempts to conform to the EU sport policy discourse in transferring key pro-social ideas and terms applicable to the field of sport (see Hoye and Nicholson, 2009). Thus, through pioneering the discussion on the social aspects of Serbian sport policy, this research has provided original insight into the under-researched perspective of the intersection between 'central' (EU) and 'semi-peripheral' Serbian, sport policy discourses in the domain of the social role of sport.

Finally, this study has positioned the researched sports against the backdrop of the main pro-social sport policy objectives in order to yield insight into the nexus between policy and practice, with the further aim of informing future policy-making debates in the realm of the social role of sport. Approached comprehensively, the analysis from this study has suggested that while there has been a positive conformity in the responses of the researched sports to the key pro-social sport policy parameters, the GFP and rugby league, although to varying degrees, have gone a step further in promoting the social role of sport by bolstering social inclusion, integration and active civic participation via programmed and non-programmed social capital creative strategies (see Chapters 7 and 8). Moreover, in extensively responding to pro-social sport policy objectives, both sports have, to different degrees, assisted in the promotion of the national strategic objectives in the domain of macro social development, such as the promotion of gender equality, the improvement of the position of disabled persons, and improvement of the position of the Roma in Serbia (Ministarstvo za ljudska i manjinska prava Republike Srbije, 2010; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2006, 2009). On the other hand, however, both policy and practice (relating to the researched sports) have shown that long-term (formal and informal) active civic engagement in sport is a self-regulated area that calls for clearer systematic policy and practice treatment with a view to wider social, cultural, economic and political contextual aspects, including multi-level coordinated action by state sport institutions, the non-governmental sport sector and the wider community (see Chapter 8). Accordingly, the analysis from this research has opened up an avenue for recommendations to inform future policy ventures in the domain of sport's social role and thus, provides an original contribution to research, policy and practice in the given research domain, which are provided in the section to follow.

9.3 Policy Recommendations

The range of prospects for 'positive futures' in and through Serbian sports prove to reside in multi-level social capital generation that, amongst other things, calls for coordinated sport policy, practice and research initiatives. This is, however, as this study has postulated, a challenging task to be met. Yet, in attempting to provide a small contribution to processes through which pathways to change might be established, the following set of recommendations seeks to inform future policy objectives:

i)   Sport Policy Process

Stemming from the findings of this research, there are two key issues to be dealt with in sport policy process: 1) Transparent, evidence-based policy-making, facilitated through the establishment of networks between representatives of public administration, academia and sport movement; 2) Increased use of social capital as a tool in policy process.

1) In line with the EU sport policy framework (see EC, 2011b) and the findings of this thesis, the provision of the research evidence for the expected policy targets should be accounted for in instigating policy process. Likewise, unlike the current practice in policy-making, analysis of policy intentions should be performed comprehensively so that, besides the legislative framework, analysis includes the transparent provision of evidence for strategic policy documents that set the baseline for the development of sport at the national level. Yet, as suggested by Coalter (2013) and confirmed by the current research, provision of evidence by policy-makers is often imbued by numerous factors that treat evidence from cost-effectiveness, values, political agendas, the power of lobby groups and the expertise and experience of policy-makers. In this vein, in setting up transparent and accountable evidence-based policy-making mechanisms, impartial and sustainable links with academia that further links vertically with sport movement and communities, should be fostered and maintained throughout the entire policy process. This is particularly recommended in the domain of the social role of sport as, in Serbia, only limited research that reflects the nexus between the national/local social context and sport, including requirements for EU policy harmonisation has been conducted. Moreover, in advancing the framework for future sport policy-making, the evaluation of policy implementation efforts should be performed impartially, by representatives of the academic community—this would represent a break with current evaluation (and legislative) practices that rely on the policy implementers (sport organisations) to produce evaluation reports. Thus, salient and impartial evaluation of policy implementation, as an indicator of the performance of government policies, in combination with inputs to the next policy-making cycle should be instilled into the sport policy process via a set of 'theory-based' evaluative principles, which at the same time, as asserted by Coalter, may provide an opportunity to bridge gaps between academic research and policy-making and, thus, foster contribution to the coherence and effectiveness of the policy process (2013).

2) Although both macro governmental regulations and sport policy implementation principles promote social capital as a tool in policy process ventures, practical use of this resource to positively facilitate the policy process and related outcomes, as has already been shown, is rather paltry, while informal interest-led networking that affects particular policy targets circulates throughout the sport policy process social engineering. Moreover, the lack of developed collaborational practices has resulted in different policy approaches by particular ministries seeking to address overlapping policy aims. Thus, there is a definite need for policy actors to ensure the maintenance of the inter-sectoral, intra-sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation throughout the entire policy process, in order to further common policy objectives and, thus, harmonise macro policy initiatives, which may additionally contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the policy process. Moreover, through commitment to exercise formal inter-governmental networking, including networking with the academic community, for transparent evidence-based policy process, the space for informal interaction with interest-led groups through policy process may be narrowed.

ii)   Sport Policy Content: Social Capital as a Policy Goal
Drawing on the analysis of Serbian sport policy and the empirical findings of the case studies, mainstreaming social capital and related socially cohesive concepts into the national sport policy discourse, calls for a meticulous review of sport's wider social role and its potential to affect bottom-up cultural and social change. In that regard, the following recommendations are envisaged: 1) Policy treatment of social inclusion and social integration in sport should be broadened, while the relevance of social capital generation and maintenance between and within the sport sector, communities and government representatives, at national and local levels, should be accounted for in setting up targets for increased inclusion and integration in and through sport; 2) Promotion and regulation of long-term volunteerism in sport.

1) Future sport policy discourse should be committed to the broadening of investment in unabridged access to and participation in sport on an equal basis for disabled population categories. More specifically, in addition to inclusion in sport of children/youth with disabilities via the regular schooling system, it is recommended that the policy platform for inclusion should be broadened, in order to promote the social inclusion of disabled children/youth in and through sport who were not the subject of inclusion into the regular schooling system—thus taking a decomposed approach to disability as a measure for inclusion in and through sport. This particularly refers to the inclusion in

and through sport of intellectually disabled children and young people. In this regard, while the sport policy agenda should capitalise on experiences of existing initiatives in this field, such as, for example, the Unified Sport of the Special Olympics Serbia, it should also envisage the place of multilevel networking in the local community as a relevant resource to foster inclusion of disabled children in sport and the community, including developed outreach mechanisms to assist wider social inclusion from bottom-up.

Furthermore, in an attempt to further increase access to sport and promote social inclusion in and through sport in the realm of the development of children's and youth sport, future sport policies should elaborate on the ways in which social engineering between sport and educational sectors is to be pursued, and how inclusion in and through sport of those deprived on the basis of poverty can be improved. Thus, it is recommended that sport policy sets out a mechanism for formal networking between the sport sector and the education system, so as to foster increased access to sport and encourage joint initiatives for the development of sport in general and sport within the education system in particular. Moreover, through formally established networking mechanisms, policy-makers should account for the opening up of avenues for increased outreach for sport promotion within the realm of the education sector that, as results from this study suggest, can indirectly contribute to the development of youth and children's sport. Additionally, future policy objectives should meticulously account for poverty-based deprivation and its nexus with children's and youth sport development. In this regard, it is recommended to set up a framework for bringing down barriers to inclusion in sport by advocating for flexible membership fees or open access to participation in sport, in relation to local levels of deprivation, and, thus, formally support the efforts of grassroots sports in actively engaging in social inclusion for sport and community benefit. Yet, prior to positing future policy objectives in this segment, cooperation with relevant institutions in charge of scaling up social deprivation in Serbia should be pursued in order to improve inputs for policy targets addressing social inclusion in and through sport.

Besides, building upon the EU sport policy framework (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b) and the results of this study, the decomposed treatment of the types and levels of deprivation in inclusion and integration in and through sport of ethnic minorities, notably the Roma population is recommended. At the same time, while this policy aspect may add to the macro social inclusion agenda, it has the potential to assist in

increased cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial cooperation and exchange in the given field of macro policy intervention. Strategies for increased inclusion/integration of ethnic minorities in and through sport should advocate for their unabridged integration into mainstream sport activities in the local community. Simultaneously, bridging across the ethnic diversity spectrum in sport has the potential to add to the macro-level anti-discrimination agenda through active cross-sectoral, cross-ministerial and local level institutional cooperation and exchange. It is particularly recommended that the sport policy framework, in the realm of anti-discrimination objectives, is strongly committed to promoting networking and cooperation between the sport sector, parents and non-sport NGOs concerned with the capacity building of young men in developing anti-discrimination and a non-violent culture in and through sport, as a bottom-up, culturally changing and socially valuable initiative (see Section 7.2.4).

Finally, it is recommended that beyond international networking for capacity building in mainstreaming gender equality in and through sport, sport policy ought to be concerned with the promotion of national and local institutional networking in the realm of sport and anti-discrimination, including cooperation and exchange between the sport sector and NGOs active in the promotion and capacity building for gender mainstreaming. Besides, in line with EU sport policy suggestions (EC, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011b), a meticulous approach to different levels of women's deprivation should be accounted for in addressing issues of inclusion in and through sport. Moreover, outreach initiatives aimed at the bottom-up cultural change of gender stereotyping in sport should be one of the key priorities of the sport policy agenda in the domain of sport's social role. In part, this could be achieved through the maintenance of links between the sport sector, schools, and local communities (see Chapter 7) to foster participation of girls in school and local club teams and sporting events (notably in those sports traditionally seen as male-dominated) through the establishment of both mono-gender and mixed-gender teams/clubs.

2) In order to further promote the social role of sport, it is recommended that future sport policy be concerned with structuring the mechanisms to additionally regulate long-term volunteerism in sport. In that regard, policy should account for additional assessment of trends, traits and needs of actors in long-term sport volunteerism so as to invoke further regulation of this area. According to the findings of this study, central to this aim should be the translation of *factors* affecting volunteerism—such as issues of 'time and money', demands for semi-professionalisation of volunteer work, narrow

trust, exercised norms of reciprocity, and *motives* for volunteering such as social networking, contribution to sport and personal development, recognition and future rewards—into strategies that will assist in regulation of the sport volunteering system (see Chapter 7). System regulation would assist in the instilment of principles for the promotion and sustainable development of a culture of volunteering, which would, thus, indirectly impact on the levels of social capital as an individual and collective developmental resource, because with a regulated framework within which to operate, the prospects for an increase of generalised trust and the sustainable exercise of norms of reciprocity throughout volunteer networks could be improved. In addition to the system of regulation and existing policy commitments to promote volunteerism through excessive networking between the sport, non-sport, education and economy sectors, spreading the culture of active civic engagement in sport and in general would require mutually coordinated action through maintenance of networks at the national and local governmental levels, which intersect in the domain of volunteerism, sport, youth, education and social development to advocate for a joint platform for active civic engagement in sport and in general.

9.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This thesis has sought to instigate a debate on the nexus between sport, social capital and the resulting community benefits in the context of semi-peripheral Serbia. Likewise, as an exploratory sociological study conducted from the social capital conceptual perspective in the early stages of the grassroots football programme, rugby league and finally sport policy development in Serbia, it has opened up an array of directions for further research, both in the researched sports and in the Serbian sport sector as a whole.

It is important to first reiterate that the socio-historical investigation of sports in Serbia in general is a largely neglected area of research that future research might broadly focus on. Yet, from the perspective of this study, further socio-historical examination of the development of rugby league and its socio-political nexus with rugby union in the Serbian (and Yugoslavian) context, explored through the theoretical framework of social capital, would be recommended. More socio-historical facts would assist in the establishment of a greater degree of accuracy in understanding social capital as a developmental resource for both sport and communities in given social, political, economic and cultural contexts.

Second, while future research on the nexus between social capital, sports and community development in the Serbian contemporary context might embrace the proposed theoretical framework in further testing the theoretical and empirical implications resulting from this research through the use of different team sports as case studies, further refinement of the theoretical approach, through mutual employment of distinctive social capital theoretical stances with respect to a given social context is suggested. Moreover, in testing the empirical and theoretical implications of this study, future research might involve the refinement of the research design, particularly through the introduction of different sampling techniques to those used in this thesis. This would require the voices of children and youth from different population categories participating in selected sports throughout Serbia to be heard, including a broader investigation of vulnerable population categories such as, for example, representatives of ethnic minorities, the disabled, the elderly, women and the LGBT population participating in sport.

Furthermore, building on this and other studies conducted in the contexts of developed countries (Cuskelly, 2008; Doherty and Misener, 2008; Kay and Bradbury, 2009; Welty Peachey et al., 2013), future research could examine the potential of sport volunteerism to trigger extended volunteer engagement in other sports and non-sports civil society organisations, including 'doing for' the community in the Serbian context, so as to address the transferability of active civic participation across areas of civil sector engagement and the role of social capital in these processes.

Moreover, there is still a need for further research to examine the ways in which gender regimes affect social capital generation, voluntary engagement, including exclusion/inclusion in and through sport in Serbia. Future research might be directed towards investigation of masculine identities in relation to the 'crisis of masculinity' (Blagojević-Hughson, 2013b; Hughson, 2013a) and the role of 'inclusive masculinities' (Anderson and McGuire, 2010) in the creation and reproduction of social capital and socially cohesive processes in sport. In a complementary fashion, covert civic engagement by (particularly) mothers as 'caregivers', in sustaining children's and youth sport participation and development in the Serbian context and the ways in which 'caregiving' informs social capital creation and reproduction of different social values in and around sport, should also be further examined.

Eventually, future research might broaden the discussion on the nexus between the social context and social capital creation regimes, in and through sport with particular attention paid to the treatment of 'children as business' in popular sports such as, for instance, football, tennis, basketball and water polo. It is believed, therefore, that these themes will additionally contribute to enriching the debate on the social significance of sport in this particular contextual landscape.

In conclusion, while this thesis contributes towards the further elevation of the nexus between sport, social capital and the particular social context for multiple community benefits it also broadens existing theoretical and policy perspectives in the domain of the social role of sport. As such, it is believed that this thesis will inspire new research ventures in the field or at least instigate critical debate on 'positive futures' for Serbian sport.

Appendix 1

A Brief Historical Context of Sport Development in Serbia

Sport has a long tradition in Serbia. In Medieval Serbia[23] the main forms of sport and physical culture were organised physical exercises aimed at mastering war skills through knights' tournaments (Ilić and Mijatović, 1994; Šuput, 2009). However, the development of semi-modern and modern sports began as of 1839 to 1914. This period is featured with the organised and structured development of physical education in primary and secondary schools, the foundation of private schools of gymnastics and civil society gymnastic associations, sport associations and clubs and finally the development of the Olympic movement in the Kingdom of Serbia (Ilić and Mijatović, 1994). For instance, the first private school of fencing was founded in 1839 while the emergence of private schools in other sports such as swimming or horse racing flourished from the second half of the nineteenth century. These schools represented the precursor to modern sport clubs and to the establishment of sport (gymnastic) associations. Following the private gymnastic schools initiatives, while still not fully recognising the significance of physical education, the Ministry of Education of the Principality of Serbia decided to officially introduce physical education in primary schools curricula in 1868 (ibid.) Simultaneously, this initiative marks the beginning of the development of sport at the grassroots level, which for more than a century largely contributed to the overall sport development in the country. Likewise, the same period is characterised with the emergence of gymnastic civil associations and later the *Soko* (falcon) and *Knight* associations, whose numbers had steadily been rising after 1876 when the war with Turkey ceased and Serbia gained its independence in 1878 (Ilić and Mijatović, 1994). Simultaneously, the young Serbian intellectuals who had returned from their studies abroad contributed to the expansion of different forms of sport throughout Serbia in this period, and also to the structured organisation of the newly established sport (gymnastics) civil associations, *Soko* and *Knight*. However, these organisations were featured with weak human and social capital conflicting around ideologies of gymnastics and physical education but also around the political ideologies that individuals within the organisations represented (Ilić and Mijatović, 1994; Jugoslovenski leksikografski Zavod, 1977). In addition, cooperation between the *Knight* and *Soko* associations in Serbia was rather weak and occasional, represented by conflicting relations around the role of these associations in fostering national cohesion

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[23] Period from 9th to 15th century.

and Serbian identity, which was one of the aims of the *Knight* association or on the other hand, supporting pan-Slavic cooperation and solidarity through sport (gymnastic) as one of the goals of the *Soko* association (ibid.). Finally, both associations agreed to form a Federation of Knight and Soko associations, which progressively contributed to the continuing sport development in Serbia up until the Balkan wars (1912-1913) and subsequently, the First World War (1914-1918). Nonetheless, these associations represented the hubs for expansion of different forms of modern sport in Serbia at the time, and the establishment of sport sections, clubs and later federations in different sport disciplines such as fencing, horse racing, swimming and rowing, cycling, football, athletics and combat disciplines.

In 1910, as a continuation of the modern sport development, the Serbian Olympic Club was established, which became a member of the International Olympic Committee two years later. The same year, 1912, Serbian athletes took part in the Olympic Games organised in Stockholm (Ilić and Mijatović, 1994; Šuput, 2009; Todorović, 1997). However, the activities of the Serbian Olympic Club (as of 1912 renamed as the Serbian Olympic Committee), which represented the driver of modern sport development in Serbia and sports associations and sport clubs in general, largely ceased its activities during the two Balkan wars[24] causing stagnation in further sport development in the country. Interestingly however, football, as an increasingly popular sport in Serbia at the time continued to expand. The beginning of the First World War marked the period of mobilisation of athletes into the army forces, where some sorts of sport continued to be practiced behind the frontlines. However, institutionalised sport development at that time entirely collapsed (Todić, 2006).

The period of sport development in Serbia as a part of the newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes between the two world wars is very poorly documented in literature. Existing data shows that after 1918, the new political and territorial sovereignty impacted the reorganisation and assimilation of sport institutions in line with new borders. The Serbian Olympic Committee continued to operate under the auspices of the Yugoslavian Olympic Committee. Moreover, the idea of the *Soko* association was strongly developed in all three countries now embodied in the one Kingdom. The importance of the *Soko* movement and its role in sport development further intensified with the project of building a Yugoslavian national identity through

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[24] The First Balkan War took place in 1912 between Serbia and Turkey, while the Second Balkan war emerged between Serbia and Bulgaria in 1913.

physical culture (Rohdewald, 2011). Furthermore, after 1918, the strong workers' movement evolved, which carried out the foundation of sport clubs for the working class. The period between 1920 and 1930 saw the spread of many new forms of sport in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia[25] while for some sports such as football for example, the period after 1930 is marked as a golden era of sport development (Todić, 2006). In the 1930s the Yugoslavian national football team established itself as one of the best teams in Europe (Zec, 2010), notably after winning third place at FIFA's first World Cup held in Uruguay in 1930.

The sport activities during the Second World War changed their appearance in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. However, some sports and sport clubs remained devoted to the idea of continuity and restoration of competitive and friendly matches, supported by the new government officials, both German and collaborators, as they intended to create a semblance of normality under occupation (Zec, 2011). Yet, despite the efforts to sustain continuity in sports activities during this period, sports clubs and institutions failed to organise larger-scale sports activities, national tournaments and the sustainability of the sport system in general, due to the tremendous war desolations, instability and insecurity, and also due to the uprising throughout the occupied territory, which disabled communication and the emergence of sport in general (ibid.). In addition, towards the end of the war the *Soko* associations, as representatives of the pre-war sport system, were dissolved (Rohdewald, 2011).

After the Second World War in the newly formed Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), with Serbia being one of the six republics of the Federation, the period of a new system of sport development commenced based upon the ideological communist thought, which amongst other things proclaimed the importance of investment in *physical culture,* as one of the pillars of the development of the new state and the new system. Yet, the notion of *physical culture* and its relation to the notion of sport has never been clearly defined and theorised in Serbian and Yugoslavian literature on sport development in the above period. Rather, it was the term that came in the pack of communist and socialist political and ideological terminology accepted throughout the Eastern European block. James Riordan argues that the Western conception of sport and physical education was thought to be too narrow to express the far-reaching goals of the cultural (political and social) revolution under way (1999). Furthermore,

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[25] The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia at the time of king Aleksandar Karadjordjevic rule as of 1929 (Rohdewald, 2011).

according to Dejan Šuput, the imprecise use and theoretical approach to the *physical culture* in the then Yugoslavia compromised of sport as an element of *physical culture*, while the use of the term in literature, policy documents and in practice intended to underline sport's political significance and its role in the state and nation building (2011a). Thus, as an illustration, the Encyclopaedia of Physical culture published by the Yugoslavian Lexicographical Union in 1977 defines *physical culture* as the physical activity of an individual (such as sport and physical exercise in general) embedded in a culture of certain values. More precisely, physical activities are not only physical they intersect with the overall human, cultural and social values and activities (Jugoslovenski leksikografski Zavod, 1977). Such an understanding of sport as a part of the *physical culture* was present in Serbia up until 1996 when the term *sport* replaced the use of *physical culture* in public policies and in the sport system in general (Šuput, 2011a).

Thus, the period after the Second World War flags an entirely new stage in sport development in Serbia (and Yugoslavia). However, although the continuity from the pre-war period in the development of different sport disciplines was evident, the new framework of the sport system based upon the state-interventionist model, that saw the role of the state (and the ruling party) as a necessary controlling and planning body, crucial for overall sport development was established. Organisationally, the creation of new *sports societies* under the auspices of the state based on the principles of 'universality' and 'mass-participation' was typical for that time (Šuput, 2007). Yet, the core organisational forms of the sport system in Serbia were sports clubs and sport sections, which in most cases were members of the particular *sport society*. Irrespective of membership in a *sport society*, clubs and sections were required to be registered at the *sport's union* of the associated sport discipline at the republic and federal level. On the other hand, the (re)organisation of the new sport system was linked with the establishment of *Unions of Physical Culture* at the republic and federal level, established immediately after the Second World War as an umbrella organisation, whose aim was to structurally gather and organise the system of sport and physical culture in the then Yugoslavia. Thus, besides the unions of physical culture at the republic level, it gathered Yugoslav Sports unions in respective sport disciplines, and the Yugoslav Olympic Committee and all the remaining organisations operating in the area of physical culture (Perišić, 1980: 44). However, besides its role in sport development at the republic and federal level, the Union of Physical Culture was a body that had a political role, which was reflected in pursuing political interests through the

sport and physical culture of its associates such as the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia and the Youth Socialistic Alliance of Yugoslavia sponsored by the Yugoslav Communist Party (ibid.). This was notably related to the implementation of international cooperation programmes and other programmes of 'common interest' but also to the socialist education of athletes, the nurturing of socialist patriotism, and the building of national cohesion, 'fostering international recognition of the Yugoslav socialist community based on the premises of the non-alliance politics and politics of equality in international relations, the fight against all forms of imperialism, neo-colonialism, hegemony and aggression' (ibid.) but also the development of physical culture within the defence and police sectors. In addition, in line with the 1963 Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Jugoslavije, 2013), these organisations operated in the domain of the following priorities:

> [D]evelopment of physical culture on the principle of amateurism; development of social relations through sport and physical culture; (…) development of elite sport; development of physical culture in line with the needs of youth and children, working people and all the citizens (…); continuous investment in overall social conditions for physical culture development and social position of the organisations for sport and physical culture. (ibid.)

Indirectly, these priorities led to the establishment of firm principles of mandatory cooperation and networking between the organisations active in the field of sport and physical culture (ibid.). Simultaneously, networking and cooperation were forms of controlling mechanisms that the state had established in order to comply with the ruling system that sport and physical culture had been developing in. Consequently, the entire system of financing sport and physical culture relied on state intervention. Namely, the sport was funded through four main sources: 1) through income taxes and citizens' contributions collected by the interested communities in the domain of physical culture; 2) funds of the social and state enterprises that invested in the development of sport for their employees; 3) funds from the budget of the local self-governments for local sport clubs and societies; funds from the budget of the republics for the sport competitions at the republic level and the federal budget that covered international sport programmes and federal competitions (Čolović, 1980).

Although it could be assumed that such a multifaceted sport system overwhelmingly controlled its developmental potential and even restricted it, the spread of sporting culture, and positive social meanings of sport and above all sporting results in various established and emerging sports disciplines at the national and international stages in the former Yugoslavia were significant. Indeed, sport in the former Yugoslavia as in

most of the former communist countries, was considered as 'an agent of social change with the state as a pilot' (Riordan, 1999). Moreover, developed on the principles of 'equality' some commentators in the field acknowledge that the new principles of sport development contributed to the expansion of women's sport in various disciplines, including investment in the development of sport for the disabled population categories (Necić, 1980). Likewise, recreational sport the—'sport for all' movement, as one of the pillars of sport development at the grassroots level, was structured within the social organisation founded by the state, whose role was to organise and develop the mass contribution of youth, children and adults into sport-recreational activities with the primary aim of enhancing the population's health, physical and mental condition and overall community cohesion (Petrović, 1980). Finally, sport development in the socialist era strongly relied upon the development of a physical education system in the schools, which represented the widest base for sport development at that time (Maksimović, 1980). The state considerably invested in school sport infrastructure and the amelioration of physical education, with the introduction of mandatory and optional curricula in line with the overall aims of sport development in the country.

The actual sporting results in this period on the national and international scene reflected investments in the system of sport. An analysis of the sporting results achieved at various levels, accompanied by the rates of mass participation in sport shows that this was the most fruitful period in the recent history of sport development in Serbia and the SFRY. For instance, the men's national football team won one gold, three silver and one bronze medal at the Olympic Games held during that time. Moreover, at the international club level competitions, football club Red Star won first place at the European Champions Cup in 1991 followed by the winning of the World Cup in Japan the same year. Likewise, established sports such as men's basketball, handball, and water polo had continuously been highly ranked at the international competition levels. However, the Yugoslav men's basketball team as a product of the strong grassroots basketball movement in Yugoslavia was the most successful at that time. Their enormous potential was reflected in more than dozens of gold, silver and bronze medals won at the World Cups, European Championships and the Olympic Games held during that period (Šuput, 2011b).

Appendix 2

Financing of the Sport System in Serbia

Allocation of the budgetary grants to the sport non-governmental sector per year as a proportion of the total budget allocated to the Ministry of Youth and Sport[26]

	Year	Total budget in RS Dinars	Total Allocations to sport non-governmental sector
Ministry of Youth and Sport	2013	3,325,216,000	1,790,076,000
	2012	3,218,668,000	1,766,609,000
	2011	3,243,746,000	1,754,109,000

Source: Budget Law of the Republic of Serbia (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2010a; 2011b; 2012a).

Funding of the Selected National Sport Organisations from the State Budget in 2013

No	Sport organisation	Allocated funds in RS Dinars
1.	The Serbian Olympic Committee	280,000,000
2.	The Serbian Sport Union	100,000,000
3.	Volleyball Federation of Serbia	93,000,000
4.	Basketball Federation of Serbia	72,000,000
5.	Tennis Federation of Serbia	70,000,000
6.	Water polo Federation of Serbia	63,000,000
7.	Handball Federation of Serbia	58,000,000
8.	Football Association of Serbia	41,000,000
9.	Serbian Shooting Sport Federation	40,000,000
10.	Serbian Athletic Association	39,000,000

Source: Ministarstvo omladine i sporta Republike Srbije (2012a)

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[26] Average Exchange Currency Rate (EUR) for RSD in 2010, 2011 and 2012 was 103.0431RSD, 101.9502RSD and 113.1277RSD for 1 EUR while average exchange currency rate (GBP) for RSD in 2010, 2011 and 2012 was 120.2809RSD, 117.4915RSD and 139.6186RSD (National Bank of Serbia, 2014).

Fieldwork Trail

1. Project Information Sheet

Project Title: Positive Futures for Serbian Sport?

Name and contact address of the researcher: Maja Kovac, PhD Candidate
Institution: School of Sport, Tourism and the Outdoors, University of Central Lancashire,
                 Preston, United Kingdom
Address of the researcher:
Email:
Mobile:

Description of the research: You are invited to participate in a research study that investigates the social benefits of sport for the Serbian population. More specifically, the study seeks to offer an analysis of the development of positive social outcomes through *established* and *emerging* team sport programmes. The positive social outcomes developed through sport in this study refer to the generation of social cohesion, social integration, social inclusion and civic participation and they represent the key observational issues. Finally, this study seeks to offer sport policy recommendations aimed at positive future outcomes for Serbian sport and the Serbian society through sport.

With regards to *established* sports in Serbia, the research will examine positive sport and social effects of the Grassroots Football Programme of the Serbian Football Association. Considering the previous engagement of this programme in socially responsible activities, the research will investigate how these activities contributed to socially cohesive and socially inclusive processes in and outside the realm of sport. Secondly, this thesis will explore how rugby league and cricket as *emerging* team sports in Serbia foster key dimensions of social integration and cohesion, bolster youth participation in these sports, and how they affect positive youth development (e.g. learining skills and learning success, development of positive values, social compentencies and positive identity) through sport. Lastly, the research project will analyse contemporary Serbian sport policies with the goal of suggesting a set of recommendations for the development of pro-social sport policies.

The study will contribute to the general knowledge and practices on the role of sport to initiate, develop and sustain positive social processes in Serbian society. The study will result in a doctoral thesis expected to be submitted by 31 December 2014.

Participation in the research: Your participation will be in the form of an interview. Interview questions will relate the issues of the thesis' main aim and objectives as outlined above. Notes will be written during the interview. Audio recording of the interview will be made. If you do not want the interview to be recorded you will notify the researcher before the start of the interview. Audio recording will allow the researcher to be more accurate when reflecting your views. The interview will be conducted at a location of your convenience. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

You are allowed to skip any question during the interview, and you can stop the interview at any point. In addition, if you decide to withdraw your data from the study you will be provided with a two-week period following the interview to withdraw. In case you do not notify the

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[27] Please note that addresses, emails and telephone numbers have been provided to research participants but have been deleted from this Appendix due to public exposure of the PhD work thus security reasons and personal data protection.

researcher within this timeframe, it will be considered that the data you provided during participation in this study may be used in line with the aforementioned conditions.

You have been chosen to take part in the study according to your professional affiliations and relations to sport development issues in Serbia that are strongly related to the main objectives of this study. We consider your participation a valuable contribution to the research.

In case you have any complaints or issues about your participation in this study you may contact the Director of Studies, Professor John Hughson at: (email address), or at: (telephone number)

This study is being carried out by Maja Kovac, a PhD researcher from the School of Sport, Tourism and the Outdoors, University of Central Lancashire, UK.

Follow- up: All participants in the study will be provided with the opportunity to be debriefed on the study's results. You will be asked during the interview whether you have an interest to be debriefed about the study's main findings. If you are interested in the study's follow-up, the draft of the main findings will be communicated to you via email after the initial analysis of the data is performed. If you find relevant to comment on the initial findings, you may send feedback to the researcher via email within a two-week period after receiving the draft analysis.

Risks and benefits: You will encounter no personal risk from participating in this study. The potential benefits of participating in this study are related to the potential benefit of the further development of sport programmes, activity or sport policies you are involved in, indirect benefit to your community, and indirect benefit for sport development programmes and policies in Serbia in general.

Confidentiality: Information you provide will be anonymous and kept strictly confidential. Responses to the interview questions will be used for the above indicated PhD research and eventual future academic research in relation to this thesis, publication in peer-reviewed journals and possible presentations at conferences. Access to information provided during the interview will be granted only to people with a legitimate professional need (e.g. researcher, research supervisors and eventually future research colleagues). Interview transcripts and any personal data provided during the interview will be securely stored in the lockers only accessible to the researcher, while electronic data will be stored in the researcher's personal computer accessible only by password. The files will be stored for a period of 5 years from the end of the study. At no time will your actual identity and personal information be revealed in the thesis or relevant publication. Your interview will be assigned a code (e.g. a specific number). If the thesis quotes excerpts from the interview it will be indicated only by the interview code, but, as indicated earlier, your actual identity will not be revealed. Also, upon request, you will have access to your interview transcript.

How the results will be used: The results of the study will be used in a PhD thesis, which is expected to be completed by 31 December 2014. In addition, the study results may be published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at the conferences.

Next steps: If you are willing to take part in this study, please contact the researcher, Maja Kovac at: email:, or at mobile phone no:

The contact should be made within a two-week period after receiving invitation for participation in this research.

If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study and your participation before you decide to participate, please feel free to contact the researcher.

<div align="center">Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.</div>

2. Invitation to Participate in the Research - Email Template

Dear Mr./Ms…

I would like to use this opportunity to invite you to participate in a PhD research project 'Positive Futures for Serbian Sport?'

My name is Maja Kovac and I am a PhD Candidate at the University of Central Lancashire, United Kingdom.

The study aims to explore how sport affects positive social outcomes in Serbia. It will investigate how the selected sport programmes you are involved in bolster socially inclusive and socially cohesive processes and how they foster civic participation in and through sport.

This will be the first research to critically analyse and assess sport's positive social aspects with an objective to recommend future pro-social sport strategies for the Serbian sport.

You are invited to take part in this study on the basis of your professional/voluntary engagement(s) in the projects/programmes/activities that are of great interest to this study. Your potential participation will be in a form of an interview.

Enclosed with this email, please find a research project information sheet, which depicts the research project in more detail and addresses the main modalities of your potential participation in this research.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study and your participation before you decide to participate, please do no hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to further hearing from you,

Sincerely yours,

Maja Kovac

Maja Kovac
PhD Candidate
School of Sport, Tourism and the Outdoors
University of Central Lancashire
Preston, United Kingdom

Mobile telephone no:
Email:

3. Sample Consent for Participation in the Research Project

Project Title: Positive Futures for Serbian Sport?

Name and contact address of the researcher: Maja Kovac, PhD Candidate
Institution: School of Sport Tourism and the Outdoors, University of Central Lancashire,
                 Preston, United Kingdom
Address of the researcher:
Email:
Mobile:

Please read and initial each of the following statements to indicate your agreement to participate in this research.

1. I understand that participation involves being interviewed by research student, Maja Kovac, from the University of Central Lancashire.

2. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

3. I understand that I am free to not answer any questions and can withdraw from the interview at any time without giving a reason.

4. I understand that I can withdraw from the study within a two-week period following the interview.

5. I understand that it will not be possible for me to withdraw my data from the study after final analysis has been undertaken if I do not inform the researcher within a two-week period from the research interview.

6. I understand that audio recording of the interview will be made.

7. I understand that if I do not want interview to be recorded I need to notify the researcher before the start of the interview.

8. I understand that my participation will be anonymous and any details that might identify me will not be included in the thesis, presentations or other publications produced from the study.

9. I agree to anonymised quotes being used within the thesis, presentations or other publications produced from the study.

10. I understand that participation in this project is voluntary and that I will not be paid for my participation.

11. I agree to take part in the interview.

12. I have been given the copy of this consent form.

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

4. Interview Schedule

PhD Research Project Title: Positive Futures for Serbian Sport?

The First Group of Informants from Established sports – Grassroots Football Programme

Interview:

The researcher provides introduction on research project, its main aim and the objectives and gives brief information on interview design.

The researcher provides sufficient explanation of ethical principles for the conducting of interview and the use of interview data and informant's data for the purpose of the study.

The researcher and the interviewee sign interview consent form.

INTRODUCTORY SECTION

- Informant's age, gender, education, position in the organisation/programme/project?
- Years of being active in the organisation/programme/project and on which position(s)?

SECTION 1: Sport development

- What is the development trajectory of grassroots football programme in Serbia?
- What influenced the most such a developmental trajectory?
- What were the main opportunities and obstacles for development and why?
- What are the main aims and objectives of this programme?
- What are the main results of this programme and are they in line with the programme's aims and objectives?
- Who participates in this sport programme (ethnic, age, gender, deprived, education, religious, etc. population categories)?
- What was the role of the UEFA, and other sport and non-sport international and national organisations and institutions in the grassroots programme development?
- What do you think is the most important for the future development of this programme in Serbia?
- How does this programme affect the development of football in general?
- What are the basic social components of this programme?

SECTION 2: Community development through sport

- Does this sport programme effectively engage in local community matters (e.g. participate in community campaigns for any kind of community development or social engagement)?
- How is community development or community problem-solving fostered through this programme engagements? Can you give me some concrete examples?
- Is the local community engaged in the development of the grassroots football programme? If yes, how?
- Does the community assist in providing some facilities to the programme on a voluntary basis? If yes, how and under what conditions?
- In sum, what is the main basis for the programme's cooperation with the local community?

SECTION 3: Sport-for-development

- What is the programme's role/activities in reconciliation efforts in the region of the Western Balkans?
- Does this programme foster inter-ethnic contact in the region of the Western Balkans? And if yes, how?
- Does this programme work towards the issues of generating social cohesion in Serbia and in the region of the Western Balkans?
- Does this programme cooperate with relevant international organisations working on sport development and sport-for-development issues? Which one? What are the cooperation modalities?

SECTION 4: Social cohesion and social inclusion in and through sport

- What is the main social role of the grassroots football programme and how does it contribute to the development of socially inclusive and cohesive processes in the local community?
- How would you rate the level of cohesion/identification among the programme's participants?
- Why do you think this level of cohesion is represented?
- If applicable, what in your opinion could be done to enhance that level?
- In your opinion, does the grassroots football programme strengthen/affect social cohesion outside the realm of this programme? If yes, how?
- How does this programme respond to the issues of gender equality? Inclusion of women/girls in organisational matters and participation in the programme?
- Are there ethnic minorities or deprived population groups (Internally displaced persons, refugees, disabled, etc.) among the programme participants? If yes, could you please indicate who are these groups? How they are included in the programme?
- Does this programme contribute to the inclusion of vulnerable groups in sport in general?

SECTION 5: Civic Engagement

- What is the exact number of programme members (including both administrative staff and participants in the separate projects)?
- How many of them actively participate in the programme matters (on a regular basis)?
- What are the volunteering practices in the grassroots football programme?
- How do you recruit volunteers?
- Who volunteers the most (youth, sport professionals, women, students, former athletes, etc.)?
- What are the main motives for volunteering in this programme?
- Does engagement in your programme affect engagement in other civil society organisations? Why and how?
- Can you give me an example of an individual being simultaneously active in the programme and some other sport body or CSO?

SECTION 6: Networking and types of social capital

Organisational networking
- What are the basic principles of organisational/horizontal networking in this programme (between the projects in the programme, between the grassroots programme and the Football Association of Serbia, UEFA)? How would you rate the existing cooperation?
- What are the basic cooperation principles with the regional, the EU and the international grassroots football programmes?
- How would you describe cooperation mechanisms with the state, the local self-government, and the local community in relation to this programme?

- How would you define cooperation with other sport developing CSOs and the CSO sector in general?
- Is there cooperation established for pursuing common social interest with the CSOs outside the realm of sport? If yes, please give some examples?
- Have you established cooperation mechanisms with other federations, or sport associations on popularisation of social issues through sport and community development? If yes, please give some examples?

Individual networking
- What is the basis for individual networking of the programme participants?
- How would you rate the relationship between the programme participants?
- How would you rate the relationships between the programme officials?
- Would you consider these bonds extend outside the realm of their involvement in the programme to other spheres of life (friendship, work, etc.)?
- Would you characterise these bonds as more formal, more informal, or both, more strong or more weak?
- In your opinion, do the relationships built within the programme have or have had any exclusionary character toward outsiders? Any examples?
- Do you or any of your colleagues use your/their social networks (e.g. with other sport volunteers) to facilitate grassroots programme activities?

SECTION 7: Trust

- Do you think that working for a common interest - that of the development and promotion of football through the grassroots football programme - positively affect relationships between the programme officials, the Football Association and the programme participants? If yes, how? If no, why?
- Does participating in this programme result in the development of trust among participants?
- Do you think that most people related to this programme can be trusted?
- From your perspective and the perspective of the grassroots programme, does the local community can be trusted?
- From your perspective and perspective of the grassroots programme, can local self-government be trusted?
- Can the state institutions dealing with sport issues be trusted?
- Can the established cooperation with the regional and international sport bodies, and grassroots programmes be defined as relying on respecting mutual cooperation and trust principles?

SECTION 8: Norms, skills, values, positive youth development

- Which norms, skills and values are supported through this programme?
- Is this programme committed to investing in youth development skills? If yes, how and why?
- Does this programme encourage educational/learning successes and how? (both for the participants and the programme officials)
- Does this programme foster capacity building of its participants and officials with regards to positive social skills and values?
- Does this programme promote and support values such as tolerance, respect for diversity, peaceful conflict resolution, anti-violence, intercultural dialogue and cultural understanding, healthy life-style practices, crime prevention, etc.? If yes, which norms and values?
- To your knowledge, were there cases of transferring skills acquired through engagement in your programme (either as programme official or participant) to other social fields, e.g. labour market, education)?

SECTION 9: Relationship with the state

- How would you describe engagement of the state in sport matters in general in Serbia?
- How does the state support the development of the grassroots football programme?
- Does the local-self government support the development of the grassroots football programme?
- Do you consider that the state should be engaged in fostering social cohesion and social inclusion through sport? If yes, how should the state do this?

SECTION 10: Contextual factors

- In your opinion, does the economic, political and social setting in Serbia, immanent for transitional societies, influence the development of football and in particular the grassroots football programme? If yes, how?
- In your opinion does this particular setting affect networking mechanisms, the development of norms, values and skills, and the trustworthiness within the programme, between the programme's projects between the programme participants, between the programme and the state bodies and between the programme and regional and international sport bodies? If yes, how?
- Does the social setting in the local community where some of the projects have been implemented affect the development of social inclusion, inter-relatedness and civic engagement in the particular projects and the programme in general?

SECTION 11: Sport policies

- What is the development strategy for this programme and in what respects does it correspond with the National Development Sport Strategy?
- Do you anticipate the social role of sport in your programme policies and development strategies?
- What are the programme's policies in relation to community engagement?
- What are the basic principles/policies in relation to participants' selection for this programme?
- What is your opinion on national and sectoral sport policies in general, methods of their formulation and their implementation in Serbia?
- Is there anything that you would recommend in relation to Serbian sport policies in general or in particular?

CLOSING:

- In your opinion what is the future of established sport, and in particular of football in Serbia?
- In your opinion what is the future of sport in Serbia in general?
- What could be the future sport developmental challenges and paths?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this interview.

The Second Group of Informants (Emerging sport – Rugby League)

Interview:

The researcher provides an introduction on the research project, its main aim and the objectives and gives brief information on the interview design.

The researcher provides sufficient explanation of the ethical principles for the conducting of the interview and the use of interview data and informant's data for the purpose of the study.

The researcher and the interviewee sign interview consent form.

INTRODUCTORY SECTION

- Informant's age, gender, education, position in the organisation (club/federation)
- Years of being active in the club/federation and on which position(s)?

SECTION 1: Sport development

- What is the development trajectory of this sport in Serbia?
- What influenced the most such a developmental and historical trajectory?
- What were the main opportunities and obstacles for development and why?
- Who participates in this sport in both clubs and administration (ethnic, age, gender, deprived, education, religious, etc. population categories)?
- Is development of this sport rooted in the local community from which it originates? If, yes, how and why?
- In your opinion, how is this sport perceived by non-participants, the wider public and society in general in Serbia?
- What do you think is the most important factor for the future development of this sport in Serbia?

SECTION 2: Community development through sport

- Does this sport club/federation engage in local community matters (e.g. participate in community campaigns for any kind of community development or social engagement)?
- How is community development or community problem-solving fostered through rugby league clubs/federation engagements? Can you give me some concrete examples?
- Is the local community engaged in the development of your sport? If yes, how?
- Does the community assist in providing some facilities to the clubs/federation? If yes, how and under what conditions?
- What is the main basis for the clubs' cooperation with the local community?

SECTION 3: Social cohesion and social inclusion in and through sport

- What do you perceive as the social role of your sport and how can it contribute to the development of socially inclusive and cohesive processes in the local community and the wider society?
- How would you rate the level of cohesion/identification among the members (sportsmen and administration staff) within the federation and/or club(s)?
- Why do you think this level of cohesion is represented in clubs/federation?
- What in your opinion could be done to enhance that level?
- In your opinion, does rugby league strengthen/affect social cohesion outside the realm of this sport? If yes, how?
- Who is the population that supports your sport as spectators?
- Have you noticed signs of interconnection among groups of spectators during the matches?

- How does this sport respond to the issue of gender equality? Inclusion of women in organisational matters and in sport practice?
- Does your sport contribute to inclusion of vulnerable groups in your sport practices? Does this indirectly integrate them in society, and if yes, how?

SECTION 4: Civic Engagement

- How many members does your club/federation have (including sport practitioners and administrative staff, board members, etc.)?
- How many of them actively participate in club/federation matters (on a regular basis)?
- What are the volunteering practices in your sport?
- How do you recruit volunteers?
- Who volunteers the most (youth, sport professionals, women, athletes' family members, etc.)?
- In your opinion, what are the main motives for volunteering?
- Does engagement in your club/federation affect engagement in other civil society organisations? Why and how? Can you give me some examples of an individual being simultaneously active in the club/federation and some other sport body or CSO?

SECTION 5: Networking and types of social capital

Organisational networking
- What are the basic principles of organisational/horizontal networking in your sport?
- Are there developed cooperation mechanisms between the clubs and if yes under which modalities?
- How would you rate the cooperation level between the clubs, and between the federation and the clubs?
- What are the basic cooperation principles with the regional, the EU and the international sport bodies?
- How would you describe cooperation mechanisms with the state, the local self-government, and the local community?
- How would you rate cooperation with sport CSOs and the CSO sector in general in Serbia?
- Is there cooperation established for pursuing common social interest with the CSOs outside the realm of sport? If yes, please could you give some examples?
- Have you established cooperation mechanisms with other sport federations, sport associations on popularisation of social issues through sport and community development? If yes, please give some examples?

Individual networking
- What is the basis for individual networking within the club(s)/federation?
- How would you rate the relationship between the members of the clubs/federation (both administrative staff and between the athletes)?
- Would you consider that these bonds extend outside the realm of their involvement in clubs to other spheres of life (friendship, work, school, etc.)?
- Would you characterise these bonds as more formal, more informal, or both; more strong or more weak?
- In your opinion, does this relationships built within the clubs have or has had any exclusionary character toward outsiders? Any examples?
- Do you or someone that you know or clubs/federation board use your/their social networks (e.g. with other sport volunteers) to facilitate federation's/club's activities?

SECTION 6: Trust

- Do you think that working for a common interest - that of developing and promoting your particular sport in Serbia - positively affects the relationships between federation/club members? If yes, how? If no, why?
- Do you find that most people in your club/federation can be trusted?
- From your perspective, can local community be trusted?
- From your perspective, can local self-government be trusted?
- Can state institutions dealing with sport issue be trusted?
- Is established cooperation with regional and international sport bodies may be defined as relying on respecting mutual cooperation and trust principles?

SECTION 7: Norms, skills, values, positive youth development

- Which norms, skills and values are taught and/or supported within your club/federation?
- Does your organisation invest in youth development skills? If yes, how and why?
- Does your club/federation encourage educational/learning successes and how? (both practitioners and administrative staff)
- Does your federation/club foster education and trainings about positive social skills and values?
- Does your club/federation promote and support values such as tolerance, respect for diversity, peaceful conflict resolution, anti-violence, intercultural dialogue and cultural understanding, healthy life-style practices, crime prevention, etc.? If yes, which norms and values and how? If no, reasons why?
- To your knowledge, were there cases of transferring skills acquired through engagement in your organisation to other social fields, e.g. labour market, school?
- To your knowledge, were there job promotions for the members of your club/federation? Any examples?

SECTION 8: Relationship with the state

- How would you describe engagement of the state in sport matters in general in Serbia?
- How does the state support the development of emerging sports, and in particular rugby league in Serbia?
- Does local-self government support sport programme development?
- Do you consider that state should be engaged in fostering social cohesion and social inclusion through sport? If yes, how should the state do this?

SECTION 9: Contextual factors

- In your opinion, does the economic, political and social setting in Serbia, influence the development of your sport? If yes, how?
- In your opinion, does this particular transitional setting affect networking mechanisms, development of norms, values and skills, and trustworthiness within the club/federation, between the clubs, between the clubs and federation, between the federation and the state bodies and between the federation/clubs and international sport bodies? If yes, how?
- Does the social setting in your local community affect the development of social inclusion, interrelatedness and civic engagement in your sport?

SECTION 10: Sport policies

- What are the development strategies for this sport and in what respects does it correspond with the National Sport Development Strategy?

- Can you describe the process of policies/strategy formulation within the federation/club?
- Do you anticipate the sport social role in your policies and development strategies?
- What are the federation's/club's policies in relation to community engagement?
- What are the basic principles in relation to youth recruitment to this sport?
- What is your opinion on national and sectoral sport policies in general, methods of their formulation and their implementation in Serbia?
- Is there anything that you would recommend in relation to Serbian sport policies in general or in particular?

CLOSING:

- In your opinion, what is the future of Serbian sport?
- What do you consider as the main future sport developmental challenges?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this interview.

The Third Group of Informants (sport policy pool and CSOs representatives in charge of sport and social development)

Interview:

The researcher provides an introduction on the research project, its main aim and the objectives and gives brief information on the interview design.

The researcher provides sufficient explanation of ethical principles for the conducting of the interview and the use of interview data and informant's data for the purpose of the study.

The researcher and the interviewee sign interview consent form.

INTRODUCTORY SECTION

- Informant's age, gender, education, position in the institution.
- Years of being active in the institution and on which position(s)?

SECTION 1: Sport development

- What is the government strategy of investing in sport development?
- What are the basic government principles/policies of supporting emerging sports in Serbia?
- What are the government principles/policies of supporting the grassroots football sport programme?
- What are the government's main objectives in supporting sport development in Serbia (elite sport, emerging sports and grassroots sport programmes)
- What are sport policy's priorities of the Ministry of Youth and Sport?
- What are the main drawbacks for the sport development in Serbia?
- How do you perceive future sport development in Serbia?
- What do you see as short-term, mid-term and long-term aims of the government and its involvement in the field of sport development?

SECTION 2: Social role of sport

- What does the government consider as the principal social role of sport in Serbia?
- Do sport and social policies recognise the social role of sport? Which social roles? Which policies?
- Does the government support sport projects that emphasise the social role of sport? If yes, how?
- What amount of the Ministry's budget and government budget in general is allocated to social sport programmes and projects?
- The National sport strategy recognises sport's role in fostering national cohesion. On the other hand, social cohesion is overlooked in the strategy. Still, do you think that this strategy supports principles of creating social cohesion through sport? How, in what respects?
- In general, what are the mechanisms of fostering social cohesion, social inclusion and social integration through sport in Serbia recognised by the government?
- Does the government support social inclusion of vulnerable groups (IDPs, refugees, disabled, ethnic-minorities, women and elders, etc.) in and through sport? If yes, does this mechanisms foster indirect integration of vulnerable population in the society)?
- Does the government have certain priorities in encouraging the development of norms, skills and values through sport programmes? If yes, which one?
  (e.g. better educational success, positive youth development, tolerance, respect for diversity, peaceful conflict resolution, anti-violence, intercultural dialogue and cultural understanding, healthy life-style practices, crime prevention, etc.)

SECTION 3: Civic Engagement

- The sport sector in Serbia is one of the biggest in the civil society sector arena. How many sport organisations have been registered in Serbia in the last ten years? Is there a growing trend?
- Which CSO sport organisations are the most active?
- Which number of active sport CSOs deals with the issues of the social role of sport?
- Is there evidence of the total number of sport CSOs members (grand total) in Serbia?
- What are the sport volunteering practices in Serbia in general?
- Who volunteers the most (youth, sport professionals, women, students, former athletes, etc.)? Any evidence on this?
- What are the main motives for volunteering in sport programmes?

SECTION 4: Networking

- Does the ministry cooperate with other sectors, ministries, directorates, councils and other government bodies in order to address relevant sport issues and create joint policies? Please specify the type of the cooperation, intensity, and the results of the cooperation?
- What are the cooperation modalities with the sport CSOs? How would you rate the existing cooperation?
- What are the basic cooperation principles with the regional, the EU and the international sport ministries (governments) and other institutions on sport social issues?
- How would you describe cooperation mechanisms with the local self-government, and the local community in relation to emerging sport issues?
- Is there cooperation established for pursuing common social interest through sport with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and CSOs outside the realm of sport? If yes, please give some examples?

SECTION 5: Trust

- Do you think that working for a common interest - that of developing and promoting sport - positively affects the relationships between sport officials, sport CSOs, and the government? If yes, how? If no, why?
- What is the level of trust in the government/Ministry/local-self government from the part of the sport CSOs? Why?
- Is the established cooperation with regional and international sport bodies, and governments defined as relying on respecting mutual cooperation and trust principles?

SECTION 6: Contextual factors

- How does the economic, political and social setting in Serbia, immanent for transitional societies, influence the development of sport in general?
- In your opinion, does the particular political and social setting (process of country's transition to liberal markets and democracy) affect networking, development of norms, values and skills, and trustworthiness within the sport programmes, between the sport CSOs and the state bodies and between the government and regional and international sport bodies and governments? If yes, how?
- To your knowledge, does the social setting in the local community where some of the sport projects were implemented affect the development of social inclusion, interrelatedness and civic engagement in the particular sport projects and the programmes your Ministry supports?

SECTION 7: Sport policies

- What are the main aims and objectives of the Serbian sport policies?
- How is the social role of sport anticipated in contemporary Serbian sport policies? Please, list the existing policies?
- How do sport policies address community sport development?
- How do sport policies address the development of the community through sport?
- How do sport policies foster the principles of social cohesion, social inclusion and civic engagement in and through sport?
- Do Serbian youth policies recognise the role of sport in youth development issues? How?
- How can sport, youth and social policies best contribute to the development of positive social impacts through sport?
- What are the mechanisms of implementation of sport (social and youth) policies?
- What are obstacles to efficient policies' implementation?
- Do Serbian sport policies rely on the EU agenda on sport or any other EU/EC sport/youth/social policies? In which respects? Which and how harmonisation with EU agenda on sport is established and to what extent?
- How can Serbian sport policies be further harmonised with the EU sport agenda on sport?
- Is there anything that you would recommend in relation to Serbian sport policies in general or in particular?

CLOSING:

- Finally, in your opinion what is the future of sport in Serbia?
- What do you consider as the main future sport developmental challenges?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this interview.

Fourth Group of Informants (sport journalists, independent sport experts and sport professionals)
Interview:

The researcher provides an introduction on the research project, its main aim and the objectives and gives brief information on the interview design.

The researcher provides a sufficient explanation of the ethical principles for the conducting of the interview and the use of interview data and informant's data for the purpose of the study.

The researcher and the interviewee sign interview consent form.

INTRODUCTORY SECTION

- Informant's age, gender, education, position.
- Years of being active in a club/federation/organisation and on which position(s)?

SECTION 1: Sport development

- How do you perceive the state of sport development in Serbia today?
- What influenced the most such development in your opinion?
- What are the main drawbacks for sport development in Serbia?
- How do you perceive the main potential for future sport development in Serbia?
- What do you perceive as an immediate, mid-term and long-term aim for the sport development?

SECTION 2: Social role of sport

- What do you, as a sport expert/journalist/former athlete consider as the principal social role of sport in Serbia?
- Does sport including social policies and practices recognise the social role of sport? Which social roles?
- Do you know some concrete examples of sport projects fostering the social role of sport?
- The national sport strategy recognises sport's role in fostering national cohesion. Still, do you think that this strategy supports principles of creating social cohesion through sport? How, in what respects?
- In general, what are the mechanisms of fostering social cohesion, social inclusion and social integration through sport in Serbia?
- How do sport practices and related projects support the social inclusion of vulnerable groups (IDPs, refugees, disabled, ethnic-minorities, women and elders, etc.) in and through sport (in sport programmes and does indirect integration in the society)?
- Whose role in sport social activities is crucial (e.g. sport CSOs, the government, individuals, international community, etc)?
- How do you see the role sport plays in fostering development of social norms, skills and values? Any concrete examples?

SECTION 3: Civic Engagement

- The sport sector in Serbia is one of the biggest in the civil society sector. How do you perceive civic engagement in sport sector?
- To your knowledge, which CSO sport organisations are the most active?
- In your opinion, is engagement in sport organisations perceived by its members as civic participation?
- What are the sport volunteering practices in Serbia in general?

- Who volunteers the most (youth, sport professionals, women, students, former athletes, etc.)?
- To your knowledge, what are the main motives for volunteering in sport programmes/organisations?

SECTION 4: Networking

- How do you perceive cooperation between the sport CSOs? How would you rate the existing cooperation?
- How do you perceive cooperation/relationship between sport organisations and the local community?
- To your knowledge, are there cooperation mechanisms established for pursuing common social interest through sport between the sport CSOs, the government, and the local community? Any examples?
- How would you describe cooperation mechanisms with the local self-government, and the local community in relation to sport issues?

SECTION 5: Trust

- Do you think that working for a common interest - that of developing and promoting sport - positively affect relationships between sport officials, sport CSOs, and the government? If yes, how? If no, why?
- In your opinion, do sport CSOs have trust in government sport bodies? Please explain.
- Do you think governmental sport institutions can be trusted?
- Do you think sport CSOs/organisations can be trusted? Why?
- Do you think the local community dealing with sport issues can be trusted?

SECTION 6: The role of the state

- How would you describe engagement of the state in sport matters in general in Serbia?
- In what segments of sport development is the state the most active?
- Do you consider that the state should be engaged in fostering social cohesion and social inclusion through sport? If yes, how should the state do this?

SECTION 6: Contextual factors

- How does the economic, political and social setting in Serbia, immanent for transitional societies, influence development of sport in general?
- In your opinion, does the particular transitional setting affect networking, development of norms, values and skills, and trustworthiness within the sport programmes, between the sport CSOs and the state institutions and between the government and the regional and international sport bodies and governments? If yes, how?

SECTION 7: Sport policies

- How do you perceive Serbian sport policies?
- Do you think they sufficiently address sport social issues? Why?
- Do you think that sport policies foster the principles of social cohesion, social inclusion and civic engagement, community development in and through sport?
- How do you perceive implementation of sport policies? Why?
- Is there anything that you would recommend in relation to the Serbian sport policies in general or in particular?

CLOSING:

- Finally, in your opinion what is the future of sport in Serbia?

- What do you consider as the main future sport developmental challenges?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this interview.

5. Distribution of Individual and Group Total Interview Hours

Group of Interview Participants	First Group	Second Group	Third Group	Fourth Group	
Total hours/minutes of interviews	15h and 20minutes or 923min	37h or 2222min	5h and 30minutes or 328 minutes	7hours and 30 minutes or 448 minutes	**65h and 20 minutes or 3921minutes**
Average duration per interview in hours/minutes	58 minutes	1h and 33 minutes or 93 minutes	47 minutes	1h and 4 minutes or 64 minutes	**1h and 5 minutes or 65 minutes**

6. Individual and Group Interviews Dates

Group	Interview Code	Date Held
First	I1.1	21/9/2012
	I1.2	7/9/2012
	I1.3	18/10/2012
	I1.4	10/9/2012
	I1.5	31/10/2012
	I1.6	4/10/2012
	I1.7	5/10/2012
	I1.8	4/10/2012
	I1.9	5/10/2012
	I1.10	4/10/2012
	I1.11	5/10/2012
	I1.12	19/10/2012
	I1.13	4/10/2012
	I1.14	5/10/2012
	I1.15	5/10/2012
	GI1.1	29/10/2012

Second	I2.1	23/12/2012
	I2.2	16/11/2012
	I2.3	15/11/2012
	I2.4	19/1/2013
	I2.5	14/1/2013
	I2.6	11/1/2013
	I2.7	10/1/2013
	I2.8	11/9/2012
	I2.9	1/10/2012
	I2.10	5/12/2012
	I2.11	17/12/2012
	I2.12	20/11/2012
	I2.13	26/12/2012
	I2.14	24/11/2012
	I2.15	13/12/2012
	I2.16	30/11/2012
	I2.17	7/12/2012
	I2.18	14/12/2012
	I2.19	1/2/2013
	I2.20	26/11/2012
	I2.21	4/11/2012
	I2.22	12/2/2013
	GI2.1	8/2/2013
	GI2.2	10/10/2012
Third	I3.1	27/9/2012
	I3.2	28/9/2012
	I3.3	23/1/2013
	I3.4	24/12/2012
	I3.5	17/1/2012
	I3.6	5/2/2013
	I3.7	19/12/2012

	I4.1	25/9/2012
	I4.2	17/9/2012
	I4.3	14/9/2012
	I4.4	18/9/2012
	I4.5	12/9/2012
Fourth	I4.6	27/11/2012
	I4.7	20/11/2012

7. Direct Observation Time Table

Research Site	Date
Rugby League Matches, Belgrade	9/9/2012; 7/10/2012; 12/10/2012; 25/10/2012; 30/3/2013;
Rugby League Match, Leskovac	11/1/2013
Junior Rugby League Tournament, Leskovac	11/1/2013
FairPlay League Tournament, Belgrade	9/9/2012
FIFA Grassroots Football Seminar for the GFP coordinators, Stara Pazova	4/10/2012; 5/10/2012; 6/10/2012
FIFA Grassroots Football Festival, Stara Pazova	6/10/2012

8. Sample Interview Transcript (in Serbian)

Interview with interviewee I2.16

The researcher provides introduction on research project, its main aim and the objectives and gives brief information on interview design.

The researcher provides sufficient explanation of ethical principles for the conducting of interview and the use of interview data and I2.16's data for the purpose of the study.

The researcher and the interviewee sign interview consent form.

Res: Da li možete nešto da mi kažete kako se razvijao ragbi 13 kod nas?
Inf: Koliko mene najdalje služi sećanje ja sam tada igrao ragbi 15 ovde u ███████ ████████ (ime kluba) i neki nesporazumi su bili u klubu i meni se ljudi koji su bili na pozicijama nisu dopadali tako da sam sa nekim drugarima iz ██████ (ime kluba) prešao u *Dorćol*. Tad je *Dorćol* tad je *Dorćol* jedini ragbi 13 bio klub. I uglavnom smo imali samo treninge a utakmice smo imali sa klubovima van zemlje. E sad posle toga ja sam prekinuo, imao sam pauzu. U međuvremenu se ragbi 13 poprilično razvio i sad ima 12 klubova. Sad ima Prvu, Drugu i Studentska liga e sad planiraju da osnuju Ligu izmedju Novog Sada Pančeva, Regionalnu ligu, ali to sve zavisi od klubova koliko će biti.
Res: *Kakvo je danas ima interesovanja za ovaj sport?*
Inf: Pa u odnosu na pre nekih 4, 5 godina da veće je, zaživelo je i verovatno zbog toga kakvi su ljudi u ragbiju 15 dosta ljudi je preslo u ragbi 13. Međutim ima i novih polaznika koji su prvenstveno došli u ragbi 13.
Res: *Kakav je danas odnos između ta dva ragbi koda?*
Inf: Dosta su zategnuti odnosi. Ne mogu da generalizujem, postoje ljudi iz 15tice koji nemaju ništa protiv 13tice koji su … mi smo sad povukili neke ljude iz 15tice inače koji su bili u Upravi i koji hoće da budu sa nama u ragbiju 13, tako da ne mogu da generalizujem. Ali verovatno neki ljudi koji su imali toliko koristi od toga da im se ne isplati da im se gase klubovi oni se nikako ne slažu sa time i nema sa njima saradnje nikakve.
Res: *Dobro. Htela bih malo da razgovaramo o saradnji kluba sa lokalnom zajednicom i tu mislim na lokalnu zajednicu uopšte i predstavnike lokalne samouprave?*
Inf: Bila je do bra saradnja, međutim promena vlasti je … sad videćemo kako će to isplivati u sezoni. Ali imamo tu sreću da se promenila vlast koja je bila naklonjena 15tici. I ovi iz 15tice su se bunili zbog naseg osnivanja.
REs: *Po kom osnovu su se oni bunili?*
Inf: Pa mi smo inspirisani klubom ███████ (ime kluba) koje je postojalo pre 50 i nešto godina i to je tada bila 13tica koji je prešao u 15ticu, ali nije bitno, mi smo inspirisani nazivom. Mi smo inspirisani imenom tim, mi nismo ukrali nista, mi smo osnovali novi klub sa tim imenom, međutim oni su se pobunili kako mi krdemo ime najtrofejnijeg kluba itd. i napravili su famu nepotrebno i to objavili u ███████ (ime dnevnih novena) dok oni i dalje drže klub koji ne postoji koji nema igrača, ima neke veterane samo koji igraju s vremena na vreme, ali oni drže klub koji fiktivno ima sve kategorije održava ne znam koja takmičenja i turnire i oni su uzimali do skoro možda i sad uzimaju pare iz budžeta za to, ali nema nema ni treninga…
Res: *Koliko članova ima Vaš novoosnovani klub?*
Inf: Ima nas nekih pa ragbista, pa 20tak, 15-20 i to su ljudi koji su ranije igrali i 15 i 13, igrali smo i u Beogradu, pa smo prešli ovde. A definitivno su nam potrebni i novi polaznici, ali mi to ne možemo dok ne počne sezona, dok ne sredimo stvari oko svalčionica, terena…
Res: *A gde trenirate, i gde ćete da trenirate?*
Inf: Trenutno smo trenirali na Sportskom centru.
Res: *I to placate ili?*
Inf: Ne, zato što je slobodan teren pa smo se mi tu gužvali sa drugim ljudima koji dolaze da treniraju… fudbal, i ostale sportove, nismo ni imali svlačionicu, presvlačili smo se napolju, tako da nas sada malo ograničava ovo vreme pa smo morali da pauziramo dok ne počne sezona. A radi se na tome da se organizuje teren i svlačionice.

Res: *U Sportskom Centru?*

Inf: Verovatno ćemo imati kod Hale i taj teren je jedino slobodan.

Res: *Da li je to teren u vlasništvu grada?*

Inf: ███████ (ime kluba i terena) da, da.

Res: *Da li sa njima već sarađujete po tom pitanju?*

Inf: Pa imamo ljude iz kluba. Naš Predsednik kluba je napravio saradnju.

Res: *I to cete dobiti besplatno?*

Inf: Pa da. Trenutno možda čak imamo i tu sreću što je bila promena vlasti jer je predhodna vlast bila priklonjena ragbiju 15. Međutim sad se dešava to da ti ljudi neki koji su bili na vlasti a bili su clanovi ragbija 15 nisu više tako da imamo tu neku mogućnost da se probijemo

Res: *Da li to znači da je vaš odnos sa lokalnom samoupravom politički uslovljen?*

Inf: Poprilično. Bar konkretno pričam za ovaj grad....

Res: *Da se vratimo opet na razgovor o prirodi ovog sporta. Šta je Vas privuklo ragbiju 13, koji je bio motiv da počnete da igrate?*

Inf: Pa iskreno da Vam kažem… nije mi se svidelo trenutno stanje u klubu (u 15tici) pa sam prešao u ragbi 13, ali kad sam prešao u ragbi 13 shvatio sam da mi se više sviđa igra. I nemogućnost tih nekih prljavih kontakata, jer toga ima mnogo u ragbiju 15, a toga nema u ragbiju 13, ima obaranja, igrači ustaju i to je to, a u onim gužvama…

Res: *A da li u Vašem gradu publika, odnosno šira populacija prati ovaj sport?*

Inf: Uglavnom ragbi 15, a ragbi 13 evo sad s nama nešto kreće i uglavnom ko je znao znao je za ragbi 15. I oni koji prate 13ticu isključivo su prijatelji, rodbina, međutim ima i šire publike, ali uglavnom su ljudi starijih generacija kad je ragbi bio popularniji, ragbi 15, mada mene stvarno čudi koliko se ragbi razvio u zadnjih 5-6 godina ragbi 13 i mogu reći da sad ima već više publike i da ljudi dolaze da gledaju. Oduševljen sam bio u Banja Luci smo igrali i bilo je baš dosta publike. Obicno na reprezentativnim utakmicama ima dosta, a na ovim ligaskim ima manje. I nema nikakvih sukoba na tribinama i uglavnom su svi u ragbiju 13 u prijateljskim odnosima. Ja znam, mi smo sa Dorćolcima pogotovu moj brat i ja posto smo ranije igrali smo jako dobri i to je ono posle utakmice, ne samo nas dvojica nego cela ekipa to je druženje, zezanje, nema tog nekog zategnutog odnosa i posle utakmica sve je OK.

Res: *A unutar samog kluba među igračima u ███████ (ime kluba) da li postoje grupe, i šta se dešava u situacijama kada dođe novi igrač?*

Inf: Odlično pitanje ste mi postavili. U ███████ (ime kluba) pa možda je čak i klub u kome se najbolje osećam. Kad sam došao, prihvaćen sam i imam odličan odnos sa igračima i sa trenerom i sa direktorom kluba stvarno su prijateljski nastrojeni i uvek gledaju da pomognu i da izadju u susret.

Res: *Da li u klubu ima rivaliteta i koje vrste?*

Inf: Konkurencija postoji - to naravno. U svakom klubu i svakom sportu postoji konkurencija ali nije način da nekog mrzič zato čto je bolji jer jednostavno treba više da se posvetiš tome i da gledaš sebe da poboljšaš i uznapredueš kako bi ti bolje igrao a ne nekog da zamrzis itd. Tako da nema tog nezdravog odnosa zato što je neko nekom uzeo… bar ja nisam osetio. I ja nikog ne mrzim ili…

Res: *Dakle Vas su odmah prihvatili?*

Inf: Da, doduše ja sam sa bratom jer ja kad sam se vratio u ragbi on je već presao u ███████ (ime kluba) i ja sam sa njim došao tamo i ni jednog trenutka nisam se osećao nelagodno, cak naprotiv to je jedan od klubova gde se osecam stvarno prihvaćenim.

Res: *A kad biste uporedili dva kluba u kojima ste igrali kakva je razlika u interakciji među članovima kluba i da li ima razlike u načinima kako ljudi sarađuju, druže se pružaju jedni drugima podršku?*

Inf: Pa sto se tiče ███████ (ime kluba) ja sam kao još i dete bio kad sam išao tamo. Međutim imao sam odličan odnos sa igračima, međutim dosta igrača se i promenilo, ali imao sam odličan odnos i tamo i nisam nikad imao problema i tad je isto bilo isto je ███████ (ime kluba) imao problem kao mi, na ███████ (naziv mesta) je trenirao, nismo imali svlačionice, ali smo bili jako uporni i smerni u tome sto radiomo i istrajali smo i zato je danas to što jeste.

Res: *Dakle ima mnogo veliki entuzijasta?*

Inf: Pogotovu ███████ (ime člana kluba), on me je oduševio. Da nema takvih ljudi u ragbiju 13 sumnjam da bi opstao, jer on baš daje 110% od sebe.

Res: *Da li to znači da ste vi kao članovi kluba volonteri?*

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Inf: Da, niko nema neke koristi …

Res: *A kako je krenula inicijativa da se ponovo registruje* ▮▮▮▮ *(ime kluba)?*

Inf: Pa otprilike u priči i zato što imamo dosta igrača … kazem ▮▮▮ (ime kluba) se ugasio, tamo nema ragbija i mnogi igraci koji su igrali 15, dobro mi 13 mi smo već morali da putujemo za Beograd, ovaj oni su isto putovali za Beograd da treniraju u drugim klubovima jer mi nemamo klub. I onda smo mi odlučili da zašto bi išli u drugi grad da treniramo i da se takmičimo kad možemo … imamo odlične igrače i odlične ljude i koji mogu da igraju ovde i da se takmiče za svoj grad.

Res: *I na taj način ste vi volonterski angažovani I u novoosnovanom klubu?*

Inf: Da tako je i u ▮▮▮ (ime kluba) i to maksimalno mi smo definitivno volonteri i nemamo nikakva primanja od toga.

Res: *I ko je u Upravnom odboru kluba?*

Inf: Pa ne znam tačno da Vam kažem. Oni su to tako postavili da bi mogli preko ove sadašnje vlasti da dobiju svlačionice, teren tako da ja ne zalazim u to, meni je više posao da skupim igrače i da budem tu.

Res: *Htela bih sada malo da razgovaramo o saradnji u ragbiju 13 na nekoliko nivoa. Po Vašem mišljenju, kakva je saradnja klubova u okviru ragbija 13, saradnja klubova i Federacije i kako bi okarakterisao prirodu te saradnje?*

Inf: Dobra je**.** Da, da uglavnom tako je moje iskustvo. Ja znam 2 igraca koji su tu iz okoline ▮▮▮ (ime grada) sa kojima sam ja lično u odličnim odnosima i neverovatno je koliko se slažemo. Međutim to je malo klupski počelo i malo preko reprezentacije.

Res: *Kako biste ocenili saradnju sa Upravom drugog kluba u kome igrate* ▮▮▮ *(ime kluba)?*

Inf: Pa ja imam drugarski odnos, neformalan, uvek su tu kad treba nesto.

Res: *Kako biste ocenili rad Ragbi 13 Federacije i njihovu ulogu u razvoju sporta?*

Inf: Ja iskreno nemam baš uvid u to šta oni rade konkretno. Doduše neki ljudi, vidim da se ▮▮▮ (ime) zalaže i verujem da oni ne rade, ne bi se ni razvio ragbi 13, a sad šta oni rade i kako ja nemam uvid u to da bi to mogao da komentarišem, medjutim ne mogu da kažem da se nije razvio ragbi 13.

Res: *Kakva je saradnja sa organizacijama aktivnim u oblastima izvan sistema sporta? Kao na primer saradnja na projektu 'Budi muško'? Da li ste Vi ušestvovali u tome?*

Inf: Da, koliko sam mogao da ispostujem zbog putovanja i toga... I to su uglavnom radionice, i to je neko njihovo objašnjenje kako i šta, a naravno ne nametanje mišljenja već smo mi na tim radionicama trebali da iskažemo neko svoje mišljenje i stavove. Nije bilo nametanja… i mogu da kažem da je bilo i… dobro to su uglavnom deca i neformirane ličnosti igrača koji su imali neke meni neshvatljive stavove ali niko njima nije nametnuo svoje...

Res: *Vezano za odnose u klubu I klubovima u kojima ste igrali, da li ste nekada bili svedok neke vrste diskriminacije medju igracima trenerima po recimo klasnoj, etničkoj, nacionalnoj, seksualnoj orjentaciji?*

Inf: Ne, ne diskriminacija te vrste nije bilo. Ranije je mozda bilo, ali sad više nije tako, ima više klubova tih vrsta diskriminacije nema više, možda je bilo ranije kad je to bilo u začeću ali sad ne vidim.

Res: *Kakvi su međuljudski odnosi u klubu, da li se vi družite i van sporta i u svakodnevnom životu?*

Inf: Da. Naravno ne mogu sa 20 igrača svog kluba, ali sa pojedincima se družim i privatno.

Res: *Sad bih htela da pređem na pitanja poverenja. Kakav je po Vašem mišljenju nivo poverenja među igračima i prema Upravi kluba, ljudima koji vode klub i uopšte u ovom sportu? Da li Vi imate poverenja u Upravu kluba i svoje saigrače, kao i u članove ostalih klubova sa kojima dolazite u kontakt i u Federaciju?*

Inf: Što se tiče ▮▮▮ i ▮▮▮ (imena klubova) u klubovima je to sasvim ok. Ja lično imam poverenja i u ▮▮▮ i u ▮▮▮ (imena članova Uptrave kluba) i u igrače, a i što se tiče ▮▮▮ (ime kluba) i sad gledam ja sma više priklonjen igračima nego Upravi… mislim ja sam kao u Upravi, ali ja em sto nisam stručan za to, em ne mešam se toliko, tu sam da kazem svoje mišljenje i to ćemo tek sve videti još je rano…

Res: *Da li imate poverenja u državne institucije zadužene za razvoj sporta u Srbiji?*

Inf: Pa u principu nemam. Nemam ja uvid u to što oni rade, ali nama uvid…, ali mislim da se nedovoljno prilaže značaj sportu i da se ulaže u sport i da ljudi i koji su u tome gledaju da

izvuku neku korist nego da prošire sport i da privuku ljude

Res: A da li generalno imate poverenja u gradjane u svojoj lokalnoj zajednici?

Inf: U ljude koje ja biram imam, ali sad ovako ne mogu da kažem da sam toliko poverljiv u neke ljude koje ja nisam izabrao da budu u mom okruženju.

Res: Sada bih se ponovo vratila na pitanja karakteristika ovog sporta, vrednosti, norme i veštine koje on razvija, naravno tu ne mislim samo na sportske veštine i norme već i kolektivne i individualne vrednosti i karakteristike. Šta biste mogli o tome da mi kažete?

Inf: Prvenstveno to je hrabrost, jer ne smatram da igrač mora da bude ne znam kako jak ili brz smo mora da bude dovoljno hrabar da stane uz svog saigrača i da bude tu uz njega ne sme da ga izda ni u jednom trenutku i sad se opet vraćamo na poverenje, jednostavno moras da se poveriš svojim igračima i mislim da je to nešto NAJbitnije da bi uopšte mogao da opstaneš u tom sportu jer ako neko vidi da si mu kao saigrač ili prijatelj okrenuo leđa ne verujem da će te više gledati tako i tu bi možda nastala neka…

Res: Da li ste se povredjivali?

Inf: Jesam i iskreno da Vam kažem do skoro nisam imao ni jednu ozbiljniju povredu. Skoro sam imao jednu ozbiljniju povredu medjutim ni to me nije zaustavilo.

Res: Koje od tih veština koje ste stekli u ovom sportu transferujete na neka druga polja bavljenja, aktivnosti?

Inf: Pa prvenstveno… poznanstva, poverenje, veliki broj ljudi, mogu da širim veze i postoje mogućnosti za saradnju i van ragbija inače što se posla tiče, eto na primer što se tiče ▬▬▬ (ime člana Uprave kluba) on ima taj neki dogovor sa firmom za suplementaciju i preko njega mi uzimamo sa popustom opremu i izlazi nam u susret maksimalno, nema nikakve koristi od toga osim što nama pomaze.

Res: Šta mislite da je ključnoje za budući razvoj ovog sporta? Da li veća promocija, veće angažovanje?

Inf: Definitivno da. Slaba je propraćenost ragbija u globalu ne samo ragbija 13, i da nisam u tome i da moje okruženje nije u tome možda ja ne bi to ni video niti došao, tako da definitivno mislim da bi medijski trebalo da bude više propraćeno i da imamo te neke promocije. Ja se opet vraćam na Banja Luku, koliko je publike došlo u zemlji u kojoj uopšte nije ni bio razvijen taj sport, a ovde gde traje već godinama misilm na ragbi u globalu nije bio tako propraćen kao u Banja Luci

Res: Kakav je razvoj mlađih selekcija u ragbiju 13?

Inf: ▬▬▬ (ime kluba) ima i kadete i juniore, mi u ▬▬▬ (ime kluba) imamo planove da to započnemo, ali kao što sam rekao šekam da počne sezona da dođe lepše vreme, da ne dovodim decu koja će se presvlačiti na livadi, napolju jer će jako brzo odustati. Tako da čekamo to neko lepše vreme da bi krenuli po školama malo… imamo to u planu.

Res: Da li se planira da se krene od osnovne škole ili će se promocije raditi samo u srednjim školama?

Inf: Pa moje mišljenje lično je da prvenstveno krenemo sa momcima iz srednje škole jer momci tog uzrasta mogu da popunjavaju i naše redove, e sad kad to zaživi zašto ne i mlađu populaciju, a ovo kažem sad jer bi ti srednjoškolci mogli da proprate i nas na treninzima i da igraju uz nas jer nisu deca više.

Res: Da li biste mogli da mi kažete da li su klubovi ili Federacija učestvovali u nekim društvenim akcijama, društvene odgovornosti, ili humanitarnog tipa na primer?

Inf: Ja lično ne znam. Bilo je nešto sa ▬▬▬ (ime kluba) i bilo je ovo 'Budi muško' jer humanitarna akcija ovde može da bude u smislu da se nešto promoviše, jer mi da napravimo humanitarnu akciju u smislu da se skupe neka novčana sredstva ne možemo to jer i ovako nemamo tu brojnost publike.

Res: Da li se plaćaju članarine u klubovima u kojima ste igrali ili igrate trenutno?

Inf: Ne, ja nikad nisam plaćao članarinu. Skupimo pare kad treba da se pomogne klub ili tako nešto, jer u ragbiju nije kao u nekim drugim sportovima gde se otvaraju klubovi da bi zaradili neki novac nego jednostavno zato što mi volimo taj sort i gledamo da ga proširimo i da privučemo ljude, tako da ja ne vidim svrhu osim ako je nešto potrebno da se pomogne klubu.

Res: Da li Vi regrutujete igrače u Vaš novi klub isključivo iz lokalne zajednice gde je klub nastao?

Inf: Pa ne isključivo. Na primer ja imam dogovor sa ▬▬▬ (ime kluba) igračima i nekim igračima koji su u Studentskoj ligi da nas popunjavaju kad nam bude bilo potrebno Imamo

odličnu sradnju i ima ljudi koji su radi da pomognu, kao što i ja gledam ▓▓▓▓ (ime kluba) da pomognem eto sad ču poslati neke igrače da igraju tamo na nekoj prijateljskoj utakmici jer to može tako - mi nemamo taj problem. Ali nije da nije bilo takvih problema. Isključivo znam za 2 igraca.

Res: Da li ima negativnih pojava u ovom sportu kao što je recimo doping?

Inf: Sad ću da vam kažem nešto isključivo što se dopinga tiše. Doping je veoma rasprostranjen u svetu a kamoli kod nas, pitanje je koga će da testiraju i kada to je taktika onih koji koriste doping ima kada koristi kada ne koristi na primer u takmicenjima se prekine korišćenje, onda imaju i te supstance koje prikrivaju doping i jako duboko možemo da uđemo u tu temu… Verujem da ima, ali nije to tako rasprostranjeno kao u nekim sportovima, jer ovo nije profesionalni sport. Amaterski je i ljudi ako imaju potrebu za tim imaju potrebu zbog sebe ne da bi nešto uznapredovali, da bi dobili neke premije … tako da nema potrebe da bude toliko rasprostranjeno, više je rasprostranjeno u sportovima gde igrači imaju korist.

Res: Da li ima drugih negativnih pojava, kao što je na primer nasilje na treningu, ili posle utakmica?

Inf: Nema van utakmica, ali na utakmicama ima nekada desi se da se potuku neki igrači ali isti ti igrači na kraju sednu i popiju zajedno piće i druže se.

Res: Da li u ovom sportu ucestvuju žene i ako da na koji način da li postoje žene koje su zainteresovane da pomognu?

Inf: Pa uglavnom porodica. Ima i ženski klub u 15tici i ja ne mrzim 15ticu jednostavno mi se više sviđa 13tica ali nemam taj neki stav prema 15tici kakav ljudi iz 15tice imaju prema nama. Tako da meni je drago i kad se ragbi 15 razvija i da ima ljudi u tome jer u suštini ragbi kao ragbi volim.

Res: I na kraju htela bih da razgovaramo o (demografskom) profilu članova ragbija 13 konkretno u klubu u kojem ste Vi da li su zaposleni, da li su student ili srednješkolci, kog su imovinskog stanja ili obrazovanja?

Inf: Ne mogu da generalizujem, različitih zanimanja, različitih slojeva od najbogatijih do najsiromašnijih. Medjutim problem je kad ljudi dodju u ovo doba kad prestaju da budu i srednjoškolci ili studenti i kad moraju da se zaposle nastane problem sa vremenom, jer od ragbija ne može da se živi a oni moraju da nađu neki izvor finansija tako da ne mogu toliko da se posvete…

Res: A kada govorimo o etničkoj ili nacionalnoj slici članova klubova u kojima ste angažovani da li je ona homogena ili ne?

Inf: Kod nas ne znam za Rome, ali nesrpskih ima, ali to se ni ne primećuje i meni nije to važno.

Res: Hvala Vam na učešću u ovom istraživanju. Da li Vi imate nekih pitanja za mene?

Inf: Ne.

Appendix 4

List of Documentary Sources

Policy Documents

National Policy Documents

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University Sport Union of Belgrade - http://www.ussb.rs/2011-06-07-16-48-10.html
Serbian School Sport Union - http://skolskisportsrbije.weebly.com
Sport Volunteers of Serbia - http://sr.volonterisrbije.rs
Contemporary Sport [Savremeni sport] - http://www.savremenisport.com
Serbian Anti-doping Agency - http://www.adas.org.rs
Republic Institute for Sport and Sport Medicine - http://www.rzsport.gov.rs
International Platform on Sport and Development -
    http://www.sportanddev.org/en/about_this_platform/
Sport England - http://www.sportengland.org
World Anti-doping Agency - https://www.wada-ama.org

Grassroots Football Related Websites

FIFA - http://grassroots.fifa.com/en/for-kids/welcome-to-grassroots.html
UEFA - http://www.uefa.org/football-development/technical/grassroots/index.html
FSS - http://www.fss.rs
FairPlay Football for Equality - http://www.footballforequality.org/balkan-and-central-europe/anti-racism-activities/
CCPA/OFFS - http://ccpa.eu and http://www.streetfootballworld.org/resources/case-study-ccpa-open-fun-football-schools-youth-integration
FairPlay League - http://fairplayleague.com/
DFA - Mini-maxi League - http://www.mini-maxi.org
B.A.A.P. - http://fairplay.vidc.org/en/areas-of-work/balkan/
Special Olympics - http://www.specialolympics.org
Special Olympics Serbian Branch - http://www.specijalnaolimpijada.com
Women's Football - Women's Premier Football League of Serbia - http://www.zfprvaliga.com/en/Home and http://www.zfkmasinac.com/sr/Naslovna_Strana

Rugby League Related Websites

RLEF, Rugby League European Federation - http://www.rlef.eu.com/index.php
RFL, Rugby Football League - http://www.therfl.co.uk
NRL, the National Rugby League – www.nrl.com
FFR XIII; Fédeération Française de Rugby à XIII - http://ffr13.fr
Superleague – superleague.co.uk
LoveRugbyLeague - http://www.loverugbyleague.com
Rugby League Planet - http://www.rugbyleagueplanet.com/
RugbyFootball History.com - http://www.rugbyfootballhistory.com/originsofrugby.htm
Rugby Pioneers - http://rugby-pioneers.blogs.com/about.html
Serbian Rugby League Federation - http://www.ragbiliga.rs
Serbian Rugby League - http://ragbiligesrbije.rs
Serbian Rugby League Clubs:
Red Star Rugby League Club (Ragbi 13 klub Crvena Zvezda) - https://sr-rs.facebook.com/red.star.rugby and http://zvezda13.weebly.com/index.html
Rugby League Club Voždovac - http://ragbi13vozdovac.webs.com
Military Academy, Rugby League Section - http://www.va.mod.gov.rs/cms/view.php?id=10703
Rugby League Club Radnički, Nova Pazova - http://www.radnicki13.com/pocetna/
Rugby League Club Radnički, Beograd - http://www.mojklub.rs/rlk-radnicki/vest/pregled_vesti
Rugby League Club Soko Vranje - http://soko13ragbivranje.webs.com
Rugby League Club Niš - https://www.facebook.com/Ragbi13KlubNis
Rugby League Club Policajac - https://www.facebook.com/ragbiklubpolicajac?fref=ts
Rugby League Club Novi Beograd - https://sr-rs.facebook.com/r13knbg
Rugby League Club Jedinstvo Pančevo - https://sr-rs.facebook.com/Ragbi13KlubJedinstvo
Rugby League Club Stari Grad - https://sr-rs.facebook.com/pages/Рагби-Лига-Клуб-Стари-Град-Београд/466632310084149
International Rugby League Clubs:
Rugby League Club Wigan Warriors - http://www.wiganwarriors.com
Rugby League Club Hull Kingston Rovers - http://www.hullkr.co.uk
Halifax Rugby Football League Club - http://www.halifaxrlfc.co.uk
South Sydney District Rugby League Football Club - http://www.rabbitohs.com.au
Eastern Suburbs District Rugby League Football Club - http://www.roosters.com.au
Canterbury-Bankstown District Rugby League Football Club - http://www.bulldogs.com.au

Other Relevant Websites

SKGO - Stalna konferencija gradova i opština [Standing Conference of Cities and Municipalities]- http://www.skgo.org/reports
CRNPS – Centar za razvoj neprofitnog sektora [Centre for Non-profit Sector Development] - http://www.crnps.org.rs
CESID – Centar za slobodne izbore I demokratiju [Centre for Free Elections and Democracy] - http://www.cesid.org
Centre E8 - http://www.e8.org.rs
Beogradski centar za ljudska prava [Belgrade's Centre for Human Rights] - http://www.bgcentar.org.rs
Gender Barometer - http://www.gb.rs
Resource Center Leskovac - http://www.rcleskovac.rs
Administration for Joint Services of Republic Bodies of the Government of the Republic of Serbia - http://www.uzzpro.gov.rs
State Audit Institution - http://www.dri.rs
UNICEF - http://www.unicef.org/sports/ and http://www.unicef.rs/unicef-i-sport-165.html
The Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America - http://www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/saguaro/
Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community - http://bowlingalone.com
Better Together: Connect with Others. Build Trust. Get Involved - http://bettertogether.org
Social Capital Blog - http://socialcapital.wordpress.com
World Alliance for Citizen Participation – CIVICUS - http://civicus.org/index.php/en/
Countryeconomy (2014), 'Serbia-Population', *Countryeconomy.* Available at: http://countryeconomy.com/demography/population/serbia, accessed on 15 April 2014.
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Institute for Public Policy Research - http://www.ippr.org
DM&E for Peacebuilding - http://dmeforpeace.omnidev3.com
Serbian Action - http://www.srb-akcija.org/arhiva/268/serbian-action/
Srbija Sport Net - http://www.srbijasport.net/sport/7/takmicenja
Positive Futures Programme - http://www.positivefuturesnorthliverpool.co.uk and http://www.posfutures.org.uk/

Appendix 5

A Brief Historical Overview of Football Development in Serbia

In Serbia, football as an organised physical activity was introduced in the late nineteenth century, while the first football club *Soko* was founded in 1903 in Belgrade. Youngsters studying in continental Europe played a significant role in the process of sport culture development and acceptance. From that time on spreading of the game was immense.

Yet, as stipulated by Zec (2010), establishment of this sport in Serbia has not been without the problems. The conservative population considered it as a rather inadequate sporting activity, which could not contribute to the enhancement of health and physical strength and the preparation of participants for the army or war activities. In addition, the lack of sporting infrastructure and equipment stood against football's initial development. Yet, despite constraints for development, football was spreading progressively, notably at the grassroots level as it was practiced unstructurally by the young boys, pupils and students at the improvised terrains in parks, back-alleys and in the suburbs of major cities in Serbia. At the core of football's institutionalisation were groups of privileged young men studying abroad who with their peers and prominent lawyers, public servants and businessmen founded first clubs across Serbia. Still, the working class representatives were not left out from football developmental processes. In Kragujevac, a town in central Serbia, working class young men and students for instance embarked on the establishment of a football club *Šumadija* in 1903 (ibid.).

The period between the First and Second World Wars was characterised by the grand-scale institutionalisation of football in Serbia and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The National Football Association was formed in 1919 whereas ten years after, in 1929 the Yugoslav Football Association had 429 football clubs as full members (Zec, 2010). Likewise, the first Yugoslav national football championship was held in 1922. Being the primary activity of the clubs, the championship matches served as a financial boost for Yugoslav football as the matches gathered an increasing larger audience. Football infrastructure and equipment were financed from the ticket incomes and thus provided financial stability to the clubs. Still, the clubs were mostly operated on an amateur and voluntarily basis, including a number of volunteers engaged in the clubs, while players held an amateur status throughout 1935. But the era of amateurism was getting close to

an end during the above period with the Yugoslav Football Association enacting an act which indicated that players had a right to be financially rewarded by the club if the loss of wages or loss of any profit resulted from being involved in playing football (Zec, 2010: 156). With the abolishment of the amateurism, the players, who were active volunteers of the clubs by that time, lost the right to be engaged in the club's decision making matters as this was compensated with financial backing.

Furthermore, the institutionalisation of football at the national level, excluding grassroots football, has gone through several phases, which tackled issues of cooperation between Serbian and Croatian sections within the Yugoslav Football Association. Bridging cooperation between these fractions was disturbed by the national belonging sentiments, and the level of football development in Serbia and Croatia at the time. Rivalries were also fostered by the relocation of the Yugoslav Football Association from Zagreb, Croatia to Belgrade, Serbia in 1930. The consequences were numerous, reflected in the boycott of all the activities of the Yugoslav Football Association by its Croatian members, including the boycott of Croatian players to participate in the Yugoslav national team at the FIFA World Cup in Uruguay in 1930. Interestingly, from the social capital perspective, the Yugoslav team was invited to participate at the FIFA World Cup as a result of personal relations between Jules Rimet, FIFA Chairman and Mihajlo Andrejević, a high-ranking official in the YFA (Zec, 2010). As a consequence, the 1930s were marked as prosperous years for the Yugoslav national football team. The victories against Spain in 1933, Brazil in 1934, and England in 1939 in friendly games all held in Belgrade, and Germany in 1940 held in Vienna, were considered by various commentators as milestones of Yugoslav football development at that time.

However, the football institutionalisation issues remained to progress. The political turbulences and national charge at the territory of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1930s led to the abolishment of the Yugoslav Football Association in 1939 while creating three nationally labelled football associations – Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian. This new institutional setting worked against football development in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, best depicted in the particularisation of championships bound by the new associations, and decreasing results of the national football team (Zec, 2010: 157). Such institutional circumstances lasted until 1941, the end of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

During WWII, football development stagnated, mainly featuring only at local competition level.

The end of WWII marked the end of the first phase of football development in Serbia and in Yugoslavia. The majority of old Serbian clubs were abolished, while new clubs such as *Red Star Belgrade* and *Partizan Belgrade*, celebrating new systems associated with the army and police but also solidarity and supranational identities were established. Football clubs from the Republic of Serbia dominated the Yugoslav football scene (Todić, 2006) with *Partizan* and *Red Star* being the most successful clubs, while the national team gained recognisable positions at the international football competitions. For instance, at the Olympic games in Rome in 1960, the Yugoslav national football team won the gold, while at the World Cup in Chile in 1962 the national team won the fourth place. At the club level *Partizan* achieved second place at the European Championships Cup Final in 1966, while *Red Star* made it to second place in 1971. Thus, achievements of the national team and the dominance of the Serbian clubs in the then Yugoslavia accounted for a rapid development of football in Serbia. The membership of new clubs within the Football Association of Yugoslavia (FAY) which was re-established in 1948 (ibid.) progressively increased, while the organisation of the FAY structurally was developing. In the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, thus, social meanings and the developmental pace of football were linked with its fast increasing popularity fostered with recognisable results at the international and national sporting scenes, imbuing ample gatherings in the communities thus affecting the formation of football identities which complied with dominant ideologies of 'solidarity', 'unity' and 'equality' at the local and wider society level.

However, although the development of football was robust during the 1970s, the nature of scoring at international competition level fluctuated between poor and solid (Todić, 2006). For instance, in 1976 the national team won fourth place at the European Championships, which was considered a failure from the part of football professionals and activists. During the last decade before the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Serbian football again re-established its dominance in the Yugoslav football scene. As an illustration, the clubs from Belgrade and Novi Sad won more than half of the trophies at the national level competitions in Yugoslavia (ibid.). This trend continued up until the beginning of 1991 the year of *Red Star's* remarkable success. The club won the 1991 European Championship and the Toyota World Cup in Japan. The same year the process of Yugoslav disintegration began, having far reaching consequences to the sport development in the newly emerged countries. The transitional period meant the establishment of a new system for sport in Serbia to which established and emerging

sports were required to transform their developmental perspectives, and mechanisms of operations.

The overall social, political and economic transition in Serbia changed the social role for sport (and football). It incorporated divisive politics of ethnic nationalism, and discrimination manifested at stadium terraces mostly in the form of violence of football hooligans. Similarly, it resonated with various malpractices such as corruption and clientelism at institutional levels, reflected in fostering individual or closed social groups' interest, thus spreading negative social capital throughout the sporting and wider social arena. The hurdles around the pitch were greatly manifested on the pitch. Serbian football clubs struggled to catch the transitional pace, which undoubtedly impacted the results at on the national and international scene that plummeted rapidly. Yet, although the transition in Serbia embarked two decades ago, the transformation of the sport system lacked to follow the general transitional trend resulting in slow development, which manifested in poor sporting results, and an increasing trend in negative social impact. In addition, the slight increase in the number of football clubs and registered players in the period of the last eight years adds to the rather scarce developmental trend of this sport today. For instance, in 2005 there were 1934 registered clubs (Todić, 2006: 213) while in 2013 the number of clubs increased only to 2032 (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2013a) at all competition levels. On the other hand, during the same period, the number of registered players decreased for 4,626, or from 127,480 to 122,854 (Fudbalski savez Srbije, 2013a; Todić, 2006: 213) players.
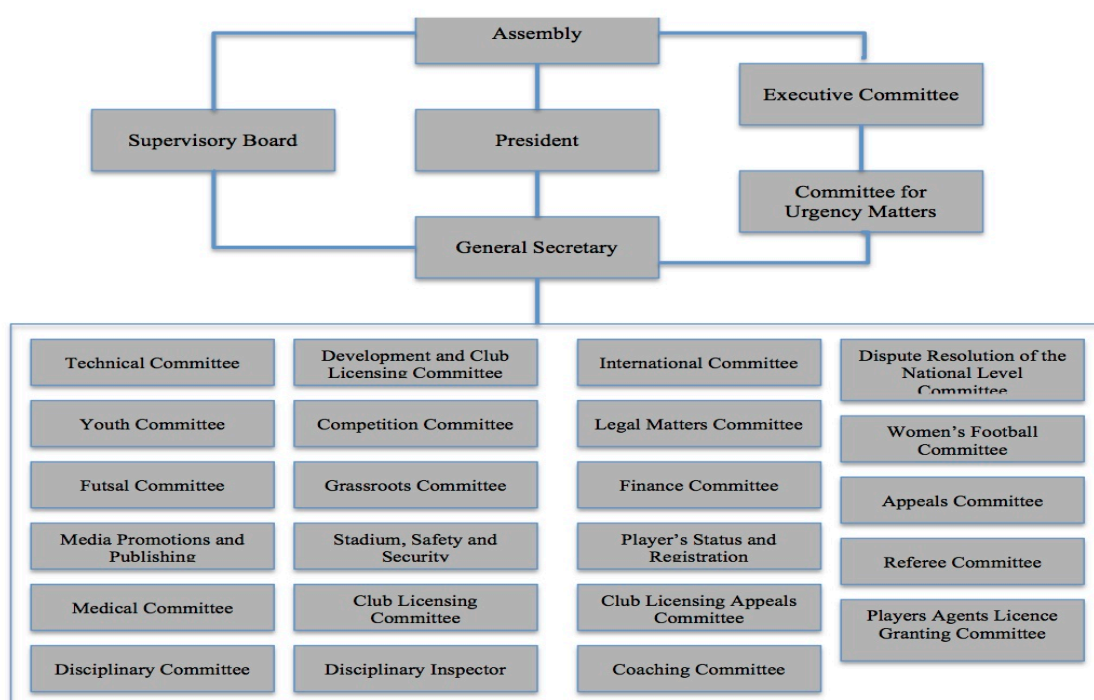
Appendix 6

The Organisational Position of the Grassroots Football Department within the Football Association of Serbia and the Organisation of the Football Association of Serbia

The Position of the Grassroots Department within the Football Association of Serbia
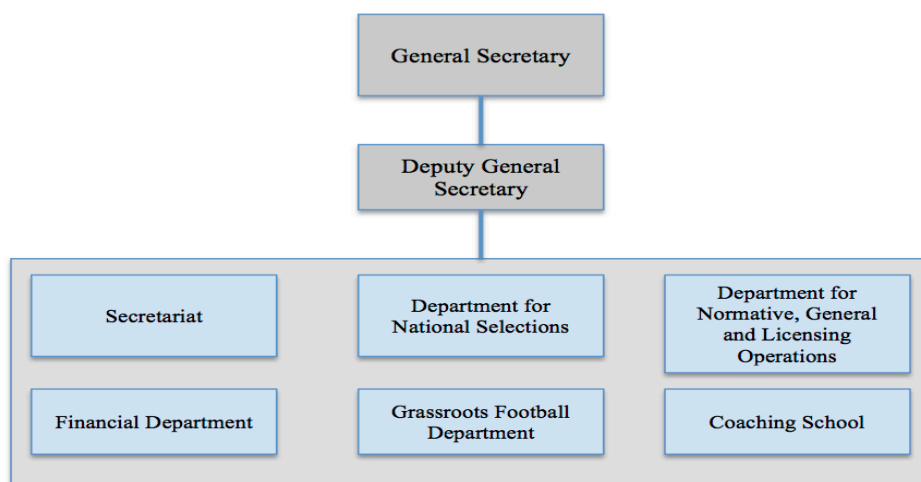
Source: Fudbalski savez Srbije (2014), available at: http://www.fss.rs/sr/savez/strucna.html

The Organisation of the Football Association of Serbia

Source: Fudbalski savez Srbije (2014), available at: http://www.fss.rs/index.php?id=301

Appendix 7

Photographic Material: Rugby League 1953-1964

First official friendly match between rugby league clubs *Partizan* and *Radnički* held on 2nd May 1954, Belgrade

Source: Private archive of a rugby league pioneer

Rugby League Club *Radnički* before the first official friendly match between rugby league clubs *Partizan* and *Radnički* held on 2nd May 1954, Belgrade

Source: Private archive of a rugby league pioneer

Rugby league club *Partizan*, 1954

Source: Private archive of a rugby league pioneer

Appendix 8

Dynamics of Rugby League Clubs Foundation in Serbia from 1953 to 1964 and Participation Trends in Senior Selection Teams

Dynamics of Rugby League Clubs Foundation in Serbia from 1953 to 1964

Club	Year of Foundation
1. Partizan, Belgrade	1953
2. Radnički, Belgrade	1953
3. Jedinstvo, Pančevo (later Dinamo)	1954
4. Jugoslavija, Belgrade	1954
5. Sloboda, Belgrade	1954 -1959
6. Zmaj, Zemun	1954
7. Radnički, Sombor	1954
8. Naša krila, Belgrade	1955
9. Utva, Pančevo	1956[29]
10. Crvena Zvezda, Belgrade	1956[30]
11. Jugoslovensko rečno brodarstvo, later Brodarac, and Galax	1960
12. Omladinac, Pančevo	1961

Source: Ragbi savez Jugoslavije [Rugby Association of Yugoslavia] (1985); Private rugby league archive.

Participation Trend in Senior Selection Teams

Year	Clubs	Number of Players
1955	5 clubs (Partizan, Jedinstvo, Jugoslavija, Radnički, Sloboda)	142
1956	4 clubs (Partizan, Jedinstvo, Radnički, Sloboda, Zmaj)	227
1957	7 clubs (Partizan, Jedinstvo, Radnički, Sloboda, Zmaj, Utva, Naša krila)	228
1958	8 clubs (Partizan, Jedinstvo, Radnički, Sloboda, Zmaj, Utva, Naša krila, Crvena Zvezda)	183

Source: *The Book of Registration of Players*, Belgrade's Rugby Association. Private archive

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[29] There is no exact data on the date of foundation of this club. The players of the club have been registered as of 1957 while other historical data on rugby league development point that the club was founded between 1956 and 1957 (see Ragbi savez Jugoslavije, 1985).

[30] The foundation of *Crvena Zvezda* (Red Star) rugby club has not been registered within the narratives of research respondents and pertinent literature. However, the book of Registration of Players kept in the private archives of a former rugby league player clearly indicates existence of this club as 13 players were officially registered.

Appendix 9

Rugby League Clubs in Serbia Founded as of 1998

	Club	Division	Year founded
1.	Rugby League Club Dorćol, Belgrade	First	1998
2.	Rugby League Club Red Star, Belgrade	First	2006
3.	Rugby League Club Podbara, Novi Sad	First	2007
4.	Rugby Club Novi Beograd, Belgrade	First	2007
5.	Rugby League Club Niš, Niš	First	2008
6.	Rugby League Club Radnički, Nova Pazova	First	2008
7.	Rugby League Club Morava Gepardi, Leskovac	Second	2006
8.	Rugby League Club Car Lazar, Kruševac	Second	2009
9.	Rugby League Club Stari grad, Belgrade	Second	2001
10.	Rugby League Club Radnički Beograd, Belgrade	Second	2001
11.	Rugby League Club Soko, Vranje	Second	2010
12.	Rugby League Club Bijeli zečevi, Banja Luka (Republika Srpska)[31]	Second	2012
13.	Rugby League Club Zmaj, Belgrade	Third	2012
14	Rugby League Club Vojvoda, Pančevo	Third	2012
15.	Rugby League Club, Voždovac, Belgrade	Third	2011
16.	Rugby League Club Policajac, Belgrade	Third	2012

Source: The interviews with the representatives of the SRLF and the Serbian Business Register Agency (http://www.apr.gov.rs/Регистри/Спортскаудружења,друштваисавези.aspx), Agencija za privredne registre (2013)

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[31] Due to underdeveloped rugby league in Republika Srpska, this club was included into Serbian competitions. Additionally, Serbian rugby league representatives are responsible for region development of this sport, which led to incorporation of this club into Serbian tournaments.

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